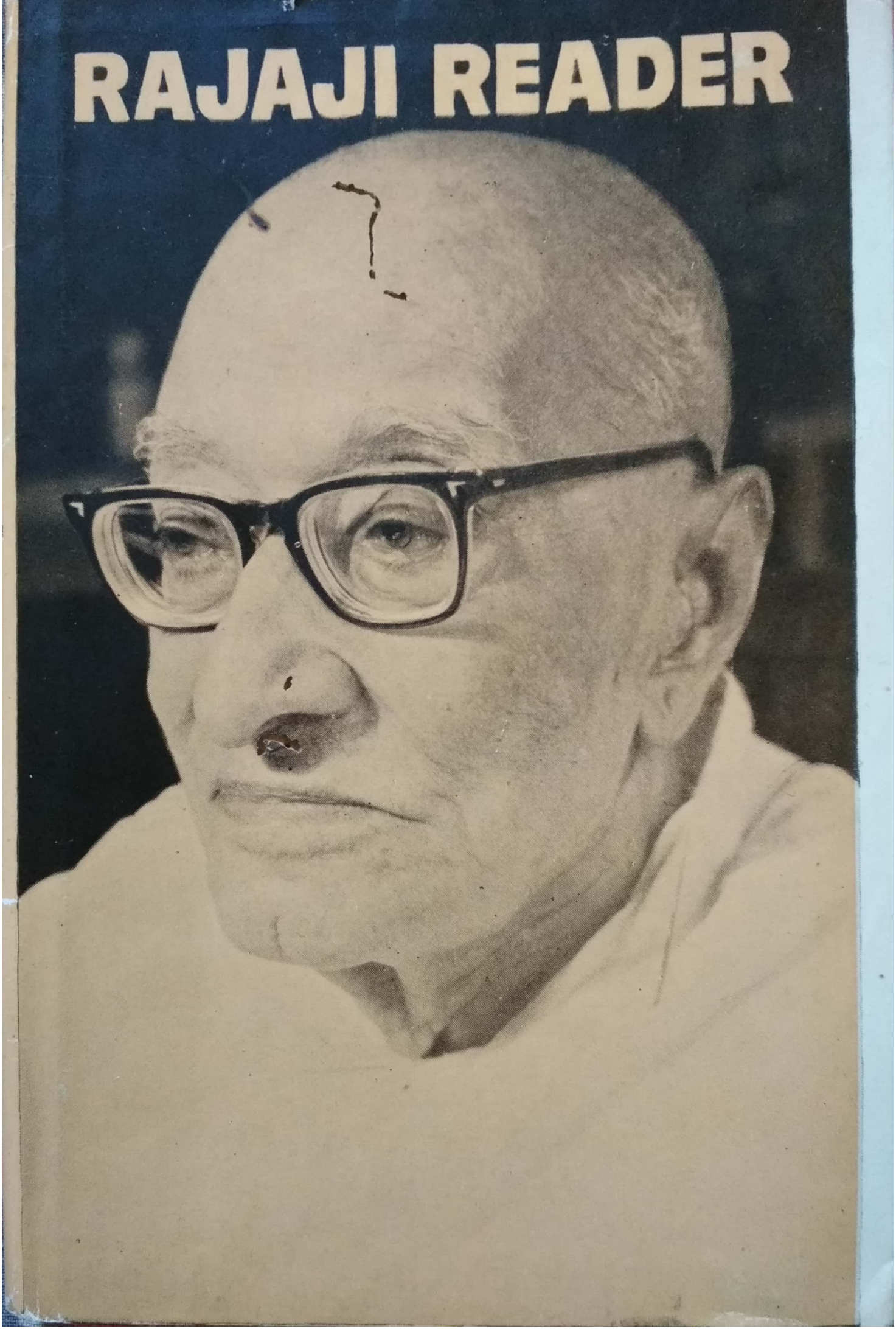
RAJAJI READER



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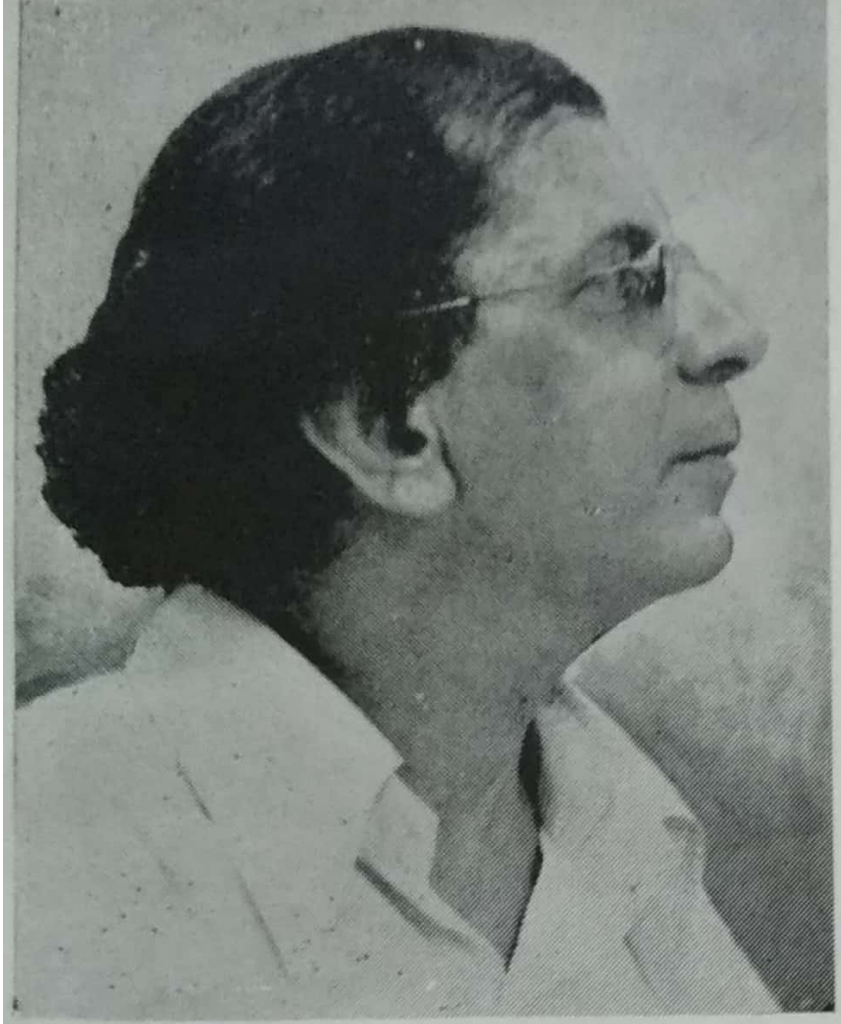

Nissim Ezekiel

Mr. Nissim Ezekiel, who made the selections for the **Rajaji Reader** is now Professor of English and American Literature in the University of Bombay. He has written three books of poems; "The Unfinished Man" (1960), "The Exact Name" (1965) and "Hymns in Darkness" (1978). He has edited "An Emerson Reader," "A Martin Luther King Reader" and "Indian Writers in Conference."

Mr. Ezekiel was Visiting Professor at University of Leads in 1964. He toured the U.S.A. and Australia in Cultural Exchange programmes in 1975 and 1976. He represented India at the International Poetry Festival in Rotterdam and in the Literature Week in Berlin, in 1967. He edits the monthly "Freedom First."

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G V. Bande
Bangalore
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RAJAJI READER

Selections from writings of
C. Rajagopalachari

FOREWORD BY
JAYA PRAKASH NARAYAN

EDITED BY
VUPPULURI KALIDAS

VYASA PUBLICATIONS
168, THAMBU CHETTI STREET
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To

Mr. T. Sadasivam

who made Rajaji's causes his own

How can I repay
you for what you
have every minute 2
your life Dear Sirs Sir?
God Bless you
C Rajagopalachari

5 12/71

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The editor, *Rajaji Reader* is beholden to Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan for his evocative *Foreword*. Dr. D. V. Gundappa blessed *Rajaji Reader* with his perceptive *Preface*. He thanks Mr. Nissim Ezekiel for having done the selections from Rajaji's writings and for providing a scholarly *Introduction*.

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FOREWORD

By JAYA PRAKASH NARAYAN

Rajaji was one of those few leading men who had played a very important role in shaping India's destiny. Ranking only next to Gandhiji in political wisdom, he had occupied a unique position in the national leadership of the freedom movement. A man of very strong convictions, he often differed with his colleagues and he never faltered when he found himself alone. He was a life-long crusader and even in the evening of his life, he doggedly fought for what he considered right and worked for the re-enthronement of moral and human values.

Rajaji was a patriot with a world vision, a believer in true religion and a great reformer. He combined in himself deep religious faith, moral zeal, political wisdom, social idealism and literary tastes.

Like Gandhiji, Rajaji was a prolific writer. His writings in English and Tamil have influenced the lives of many people. We owe a duty to posterity to preserve his thoughts. His words of wisdom can serve as a guide-line for the future generation. Like ancient saints and sages, Rajaji was a teacher of men who always reminded us of our moral and cultural heritage which made India great and unique in the world.

Sri Vuppuluri Kalidas, a devoted follower of Rajaji, has edited this fine volume containing representative selections from Rajaji's writings, and has offered it to the people of India in reverential homage to the immortal spirit of Rajaji during his Birth Centenary Year. These selections have been made by Sri Nissim Ezekiel, a well-known writer, and they cover the full range of Rajaji's interests and concerns. His ideas on many questions continue to be relevant,

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for they throw light on the cultural situation from which they derive their meaning and help us to understand it. Rajaji was deeply rooted in Indian soil.

In his inimitable style Rajaji had summarized his own philosophy of patriotism in the following words :

'Do you love the common folk of our land, the men and women who swarm in town and village? Do you love the languages they speak? Do you love their ways and manners? Do you love the religion they believe in, not looking upon it as ignorance but no better wisdom than your own? All this love sums up to patriotism . . . . I see the defects among our people as well as I see their admirable qualities. Their general apathy I deplore. I would have them show more energy in many matters more than they do now, more tolerance and love towards one another, more capacity to work together for common purposes.'

The editor has done a commendable job in bringing together the colourful gems of Rajaji's thoughts in a single volume and made available to the general readers this beautiful collection. I wish him all success in his efforts to carry the message of Rajaji to the people at large.

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PREFACE

By Dr. D. V. Gundappa

I am deeply sensible of the honour of being asked to introduce the writings of Sri C. Rajagopalacharya to the public. But, how would it be if the nameless hillock in front of the GIPA* Building pretended to introduce the Himalayas. Similar is the position here. But there are reasons why I should not shirk. I therefore write this and I write not as a schoolmaster recommending the merits of his pupil, but as a student speaking to his fellow-students on a subject of the most intimate and immediate interest to both.

The subject is Culture—humanistic culture, which is one of the most lamentable wants of our public life today.

A few years ago, when Rajaji was a Member of the Nehru Cabinet, he was on a visit to Bangalore, staying with his life-long friend, Sri Navaratna Rama Rao. One afternoon then, I happened to go there (as it was close to my house) for a chat. As we three sat talking there came into our midst Sri K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, a former Minister of Mysore, who was a universally esteemed citizen. Our talk continued. Sri Rama Rao who had some 2-3 days previously lectured in public on Maupassant made bold to remark: "The man who has not studied Maupassant can have no claims to be regarded as a man of culture." This remark sparked off a controversy. Sri Srinivasa Iyengar took fire at once and said "the man who has not read the *Prabandhas* can have no claim to be regarded as a man of culture." When the two controversialists had let off initial steam, and cooled down for a quiet discussion, Rajaji proceeded in his smiling, deliberate way to define what they meant by Culture.

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* Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs.

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I can think of no better exponent of culture than Rajaji for our times.

"Culture is self-restraint ; Culture is taking care not to obtrude yourself upon others, setting them aside."

It is being anxious to modify your opinion or idea by what can be accepted in the opinions and ideas of others. It is, in one word, making yourself accepted. It is humility, patience and earnestness in your desire to improve the situation. Culture is thus an attitude and an approach towards things which come to a mind which has fed itself upon the thoughts and experiences of other people concerned. Literature, History, Art, Philosophy, all these go to form Culture. One definition is found in the essay, *On popular Culture* by John Morley. Culture, in Morley's words, is " the habit of valuing, not merely speculative nor scientific truth, but the truth of practical life ; a practising of the intellect in forming and expressing the opinions and judgments that form the staple of our daily intercourse."

Culture is opposed as much to dogmatism as to rudeness and crudity of mind. Indeed dogmatism is itself a form of crudeness. It refuses to look at an aspect of truth from which it fears dislodgement of itself ; and this crudity of mind and stubbornness is the worst obstacle on the way to truth and the right. It negates the central object of democracy which is a collective search for truth, each mind supplementing the others.

True Culture makes for imaginative understanding and this understanding comes from the universalising of one's experience. This universalising takes place as a result of the study of literature and the experience of emotions made possible by high Art.

The need for culture in India, in spite of her aeonlong tradition of culture, may be appreciated if one looks at the public dissensions and brawlings of our time. The style of talk of our legislators and their mutual behaviour betray a woeful lack of the spirit of mutual appreciation and the desire to improve from mutual contacts.

Matthew Arnold defined Culture as "Sweetness and Light in communication". Your word must convey new information and it should be persuasive in manner,

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Without these qualities of significant information and persuasiveness of manners, all public communication is bound to deteriorate to the level of a street brawl. It is to this deterioration of public manners that Rajaji recommends Culture as the antidote.

The other essays in the book illustrate this point. An exceedingly thoughtful introduction, written in a comprehensive and suggestive style by Sri Ezekiel, who has insightful understanding of Rajaji as a public man and teacher of the public, precedes the pieces.

It is not easy to make selections from the writings and speeches of one who has been writing and speaking to the public continuously for over half-a-century, practically on every aspect of their life. Politics, of course, absorbed the main stream of Rajaji's energies,—the winning of Independence for the nation and the establishing of citizenship on sound bases. Incidental to citizenship were temperance, and Harijan uplift and elevation of character generally. Rajaji devoted attention not only to what interested his people, but also to what should have been of interest to them.

And he spoke with a clarity and force of reasoning that could not fail to go home. All the pieces in this book of selections are marked by a width and freshness of view and grace and vigour of phrase that the reader incidentally, is put in contact with good English on worthwhile topics.

I have no hesitation in saying that this book would make a fitting *Rajaji Reader* showing a cross-section, so to say, of his large and incisive mind. Persons in authority over education would be rendering no small service to the cause of good citizenship if they would include the *Rajaji Reader* among books for study by students of high school, and college classes. Every piece in it is a study of *Dharma* both universal and national and a study of the way of evaluating an argument or an idea ; and it is thus an education for both right emotion and sound intellectual functioning.

I earnestly wish our young men would study these essays carefully and prepare themselves for an active life of citizenship—an active life of which Rajaji set a celebrated

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example by devoting himself ceaselessly and tirelessly to one public cause or another as long as breath lasted in his physical life of 95 long years. It was a blessed life in every respect and all that a lover of the country would feel like saying is that God may grant that Rajaji's countrymen may prove themselves worthy of the memory of a life so glorious and blessed.

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INTRODUCTION

By Nissim Ezekiel

The selections in this volume have been made with a view to cover the full range of Rajaji's interests and concerns. Whenever possible, I have preferred the longer, more substantial statements to the short pieces from his collected writings and speeches. These short pieces alone run into hundreds of pages. In some cases, however, where I felt that Rajaji had defined a particular position with special incisiveness, I did not hesitate to make exceptions.

The *Reader* is offered as an introduction only and not as a comprehensive and representative historical compilation. For this reason, I confine myself to the period after Independence. The *Reader* is as objective and impersonal as I could make it. I did not include any speech or essay merely because I am in sympathy with its contents, nor exclude one because I consider it vulnerable in a possible controversy. My sole intention was to exercise my judgment regarding the occasions when Rajaji was at his best, when his words reflected most faithfully his deepest convictions.

That Rajaji is a thinker of strong convictions is obvious, but his prolific output, I sometimes feel, obscures rather than clarifies his point of view. The *Reader* aims to define that point of view, which is certainly well considered whatever its shortcomings, and even these are of interest to the serious student of the Indian scene. When Mr. Chalapathi Rau describes himself not only as one of Rajaji's "consistent admirers" but also as one of his "consistent critics", I understand the implication and hope that readers of this book will do so too (*All in All*, Vyasa Publications, Madras). Many of us in India see no connection between admiration and criticism.

Rajaji is not one of those Indian saints and sages who declare their doctrine and then endlessly repeat it without further argument. He is a thinker who remains in the realm of thought and subjects himself to its laws. He uses the normal idiom of discussion and does not invent any special

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transcendental terminology. He quotes the scriptures but not as a substitute for logic. He is sometimes eloquent and even rhetorical but only to persuade, and to enhance the force of a belief, not to evade the counter-argument. There is a patient, perpetual willingness in him to state the contrary ideological positions fairly and to try to cope with them. Exasperation and even anger may enter the picture but never to distort his opponents' ideas. The dignified yet fervent *Reply to Nehru* exemplifies this attitude.

Rajaji has always been more understanding in his treatment of his critics than they have been of him. I don't remember reading a single serious attack on him which did him the elementary courtesy of outlining his basic contentions. What Rajaji's critics want of him is to shut up. And he wont't shut up.

Rajaji is of course a traditionalist and this writer is not. It would be presumptious to discuss the contrast here, as if it matters to Rajaji's readers. That contrast may well be the subject of a different intellectual enterprise at another time and place. One of my motives in undertaking this task—a series of selections from the works of India's eminent contemporary personalities—is nothing less than self-definition. But this motive will not be allowed to intrude on the selections, which have their own independent purpose. The focus in every *Reader* is intended to remain wholly on the author from whose writings the selections are made.

When I say that Rajaji is a traditionalist I mean only that his norms are derived from a tradition. He uses them in evaluating the present. Even to a modernist, this procedure has its validity and integrity, if one is not narrow-minded, superficial and unhistorical. The modernist evaluates the tradition with the norms of the present, at least predominantly if not wholly, and these norms are likely to be less assured and clear than the traditional ones. Even to a traditionalist, this procedure has its validity and integrity if one is not narrow-minded, superficial and unhistorical. If I am right in these formulations, there is a common meeting ground for traditionalist and modernist, though I won't suggest that the differences are not formidable.

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My sense of these differences, which is very keen, is affected by my feeling that it is impossible for either kind of personality, even in its purest form, to function effectively without points of contact with the other. Rajaji is easier for a modernist to use as a traditionalist reference than Gandhiji. His *Religion for Modern Times*, *Silken Thread of the Gita*, *Essentials of Indian Culture* and *The Value of Traditional Values* add up to a reasonable and not a forbidding reference for a contemporary dialectic in the sense I have indicated.

I shall not claim that Rajaji's answers to the questions that arise in living in the modern world are wholly adequate. But they are wholly relevant. They throw light on the cultural situation from which they derive their meaning, and so help us to understand it. To understand Rajaji is not only to understand him but also his admirers, which means millions of his countrymen. He represents their modes of thinking and feeling, though most of his specific formulations are entirely individualistic. For all his political affiliations and journalistic loyalties, his is essentially a lone voice. At the same time, he is not an outsider or rebellious dissenter. He is much too Indian for that, too deeply rooted in Indian soil and part of the Indian ethos. He speaks a very Indian language, which merely happens to be English. And he enjoys writing it. He has a zest for writing. He is a writer as Gandhiji and Pandit Nehru were writers.

Rajaji has the air of a man who makes his contribution and leaves it, and he does not create the impression that he has arrived at the truth, from which all deviations are essentially heretical and immoral. He would be satisfied, it appears, if his ideas are weighed in the balance, along with others, and included in the final reckoning. This *Reader* has been compiled in the same spirit.

Rajaji's emphasis on the civic aspects of Hinduism is a valuable contribution to modern Indian culture which needs that emphasis. So is the importance he attaches to the individual and his motivations, to work and the sense of responsibility, to initiative and zeal, to social co-operation and service. His interpretation of the *Vedanta* may be

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debated by the experts but its effect on the general reader can only be salutary.

Progress and scientific knowledge may or may not be wholly in consonance with the traditional doctrines of Hinduism but Rajaji's reconciling effort does throw light on the problem. His view that religions contradicting the conclusions of science "cannot but degenerate into formalism and hyprocrisy" enhances the claims of science without abandoning the domain of religion. "There is behind the work of material phenomena," says Rajaji "a mystery that calls for awe and reverence and faith as distinguished from injury. Man's attitude towards this mystery that hides behind the phenomenal world is what is called Religion."

Specific religious doctrines may obscure this general truth and their practice may even destroy it. All the same, it is the real source of religious feeling and thinking as expounded by innumerable authorities both in the West and in the East, and Rajaji belongs with them in a universal tradition.

That the doctrine of *karma* does not underestimate human effort, that there are several ways to reach God and that different forms of worship must be respected, that all one is and has is a trust for good uses, that disinterested work is elevated to the rank of worship in the Hindu scriptures, these ideas Rajaji has persistently and cogently propagated. Much depends on how they are applied to concrete situations. They can be easily perverted to support conservative or reactionary policies, to suppress the voices of rebellion and the demands of the underprivileged, to refute radical criticism of corrupt social and religious practices, and to oppose that transformation of values which the modern world is witnessing A critique of Rajaji's life and work which is not attempted here would have to go into these questions, testing word with action and policy with conduct. All that concerns me, for making selections for this *Reader* is that Rajaji spoke with the same voice when the tide was against him as he did when it carried him to the heights of power and national status. That surely is a sign of integrity.

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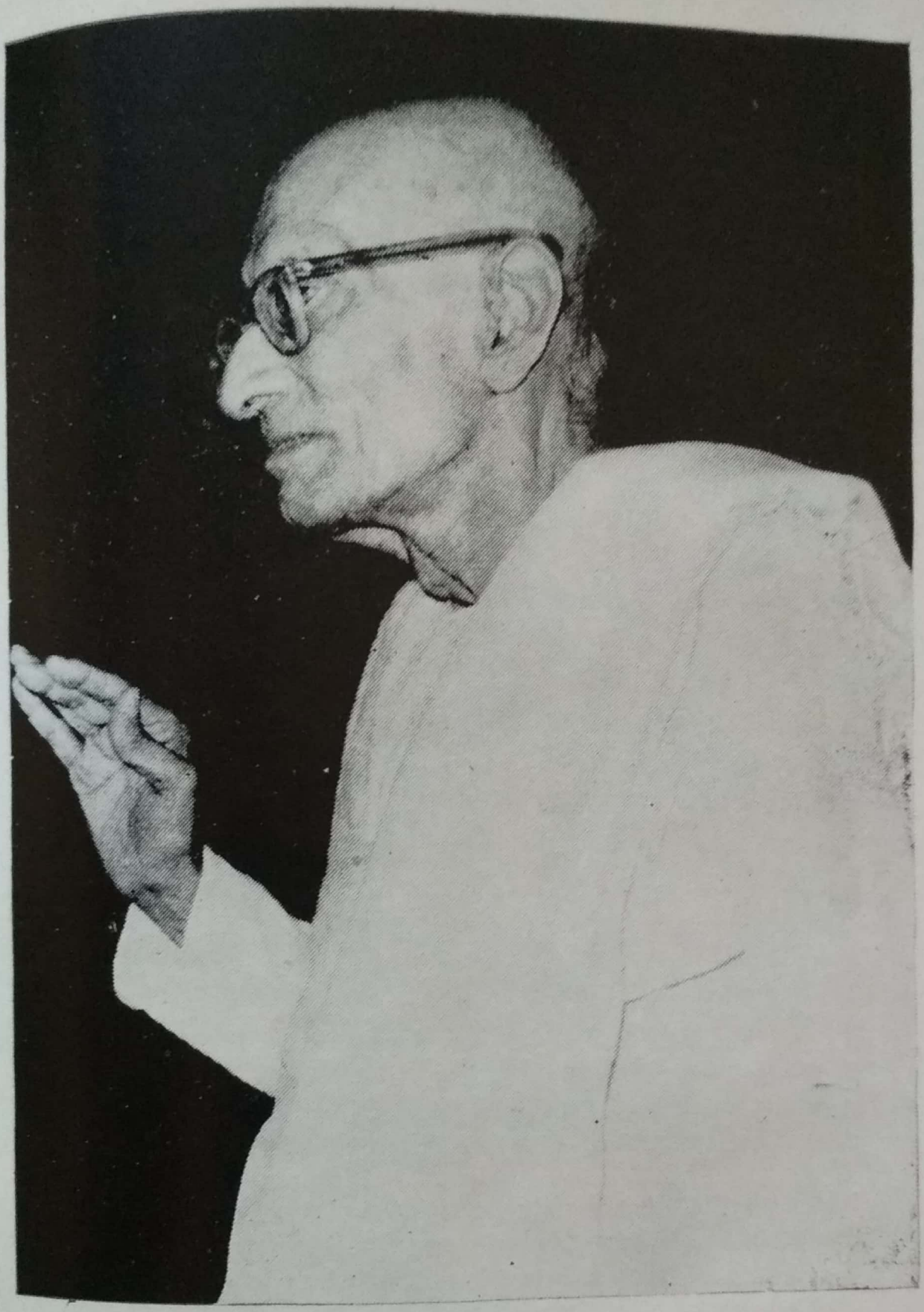

Rajaji making a point in his characteristic style.

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Autobiographical

Rajaji distils for us the wisdom he has gathered from a life of strenuous struggle in the pursuit of the highest ideals. The second essay is a little episode based on his Salem background.

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What life has taught me

I CAN put in a few words what I have learned from life: Life is God's *leela*. This Sanskrit word *leela* is not just "play," although it is generally so rendered in English. The Sanskrit word expresses what to us is the more important negative result of any attempt to unravel the mystery of life; namely, that we cannot make out the design though undoubtedly there is design, order and law. The nearest approach to an explanation is that the great Master of the Universe amuses Himself, but we cannot unravel the mysteries of this highly organized divine play except that the inexorable law of Karma governs it—every action brings with it inescapably and unfailingly, its results. I have also learned this—that the greatest happiness results from being good; that is from following the moral law in spite of every seeming pain and privation associated with it.

I have also found that any attempt to define what is good is futile, because of the various results of every action. One man's good is almost invariably another man's pain or privation. Good can only be relatively determined. The teaching of the Gita of the Hindus contains the soundest advice, namely, do what is laid as duty on your shoulders in the context of each moment and do it unselfishly and surrendering yourself to God. One man's duty may differ from another's and what is good at one time may not be the right thing at another time. Unselfishness and unbroken reliance on God and faithful use of one's reasoning powers must decide what at each juncture public or private, one's duty is. This is not Hinduism alone or the Bhagavad-gita alone. It is the teaching of every great religion. But the Gita expatiates on it as if intimately dealing with a tough skeptic.

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These being the lessons I have learned from life as well as from good books and the company of good men and women, what is my present personal summing-up of the world situation? It is at present a rather sad one—of disappointment and retarded hope.

When the atomic bombs were exploded over Japan and World War II was brought to an end, I was among those who rejoiced but were also deeply alarmed. I rejoiced that the victory of the Allies and the defeat of Hitler, with his brutalities and terror, were steadily approaching, but when the actual end came in the way it did, it filled me with sadness and a terror unequalled by anything inflicted by Hitler and his satanic power.

I watched with dismay and grief the race in nuclear production that immediately followed. The world was in the grip of terror out of which it had to escape; but instead of doing what should end the terror, powerful nations went on adding to the danger and the terror.

A stage was reached when the new weapons of total annihilation no doubt served to prevent war, but they did this by adding to the danger in ever-increasing measure, for if ever the poised balance of terror failed, war would arrive.

This form of peace soon resulted in the withdrawal of all the support against injustice and aggression that the weaker nations had obtained from more powerful nation friends. In the pre-atomic period the more powerful nations gave help to their weaker friends. After the nuclear terror arrived, everyone was afraid of 'escalation' of the defence of a weaker nation into a terrible world war.

This led to a period of greatly increased activity by way of debate, discussion and negotiation in the world forum. The United Nations Organization assumed great importance and seemed rapidly to approach the role of world government. The great book of Clark and Sohn, *World Peace Through World Law*, is a demonstration and a symbol of the hopes that the role of the UN raised during this period.

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It was a complete, very carefully drawn up draft bill for the nations of the world to adopt, by which the UN would be transformed into an effective world authority acting under world law and there would be an end to war and the fear of war.

The grant by the British Parliament of complete independence to India and Pakistan in 1947 followed immediately by similar withdrawal of all imperial power from Burma and Ceylon, was a great landmark in world history. The British Empire was peacefully liquidated by the British Parliament. This was a signal for the termination of colonialism throughout the world. America with its congenital bias against colonialism and Russia with its slogan of anti-imperialism both hurried to grant independence to numerous big and small nations spread over Africa, Asia, and elsewhere. The United Nations Organization admitted all these new nations as units, all of them being equal to one another whether big or small, powerful or insignificant. This was an advantage, but it carried with it the great disadvantage of the organization being overloaded with 'have-not' units carrying no power behind them. Soon the United Nations Organization was infected not only by the old cold war poison but also by a new poison distilled out of the old anti-imperialist feelings. Blocs began to be organized in the UN that blasted the hopes of its growing into an effective world authority under world law. Nationalism grew again into a dynamic force replacing the internationalism that had marked the end of the Second World War and had raised vast hopes in the minds of world statesmen. Today that internationalism and that great hope have both nearly disappeared. The powerful French President is the biggest symptom of this new nationalism. The polarization of the nations of the world into free and Communist tended to replace nationalism by a world outlook pulling either one way or the other. Each side hoped the other side's consolidation would break up as a result of nationalist forces. But what actually happened is that both

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sides underwent that change and world consolidation has suffered badly as a result. The regenerated nationalism of the big nations of the world and the persistent anti-West feelings of the newly emancipated small nations have both become great roadblocks in the march to a world government. The goal appeared near enough some years ago but it has receded very far now.

And as a result of this setback, the old cold war which seemed to be disappearing has got a fresh start. China is in the front line of this new phase of the cold war and Russia can but join her comrade willingly or otherwise. The prospect for the world has become indeed bleak.

Let us for the some relief, go back to the divine *leela*. There could have been nothing conceivably more vicious than the slave trade, which planted a large number of Africans in the United States of America. The Negroes of America are no longer slaves but are a significant section of a free and great nation. Their present movement for full integration with the white majority is today a point of irritation like the one within the oyster that makes the precious pearl. Similarly this present irritation in the United States will lead to something great and precious, the breakdown of one of the most stupid of superstitions that the colour of the skin makes a real difference between man and man. The defects, intellectual or moral, in a Southern white person appear to many, if not most, white people in the U.S. as tolerable and remediable, but the same defects in a black man are felt by the same people to be intolerable and permanently associated with the skin pigment and therefore unchangeable. This is an attitude hard to cast out. Often one's intellect and reason would admit the attitude to be baseless, but sentiment persists against intellect. The prejudice disappears only when the pigment is outbalanced by talent, wealth or enlightenment. Even where it is overcome, it is often only an external conquest, not a complete internal annulment.

This colour superstition is not confined to white against

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Negro, but prevails throughout the world in some form or another. In India it takes the form of caste prejudice and in a higher value stupidly and openly set on a fair complexion. And this in a country where the races got hopelessly mixed up many thousands of years ago.

The criminal slave trade made for the ultimate coming into being of a great number of Africans who are as enlightened as the natives of Europe who live and progressed in America. These enlightened Negroes have a great mission cut out for them after integration with their fellow citizens in the U.S. It will be the uplift of their cousins in Africa—uplift not in the superficial sense of political stir, but in the real sense of a rise of level in enlightened living. This would be a capital demonstration of good coming out of evil in the not too distant future. And perhaps there will be exchange of good on both sides, for the black people of Africa have something valuable to give to their cousins in America, who have adopted American culture.

The evolution of human civilization takes its course through what is obviously good and gentle as well as through oppression through ambition and conquests as well as through the voluntary consolidation of groups of humans, and through their joint activities. What has been recorded in history as activities of ambitious and wicked leaders of men has all helped toward the evolution of what we now recognize as progress and civilization. The British occupation of India is a patent example of how good comes out of evil. It is not an exception. It is only one patent illustration of what has been going on in God's *leela* from time immemorial. The regions and the human groups now divided into separate nations as Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Burma, Tibet, Malaysia, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, Nagaland and so on in Asia were all one vast region under Britain and could have entered the UN as one unit.

I remember when India was legally released from Britain and the question before us was whether to be completely

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isolated from the United Kingdom or to remain in the Commonwealth as one of its units recognizing the British sovereign's symbolic status as head of the Commonwealth. Jawaharlal Nehru, no doubt under the subtle influence of Earl Mountbatten, told me that he was inclined to remain in the Commonwealth, because as he put it to me, it is good for world peace and progress that nations come together rather than be isolated and the Commonwealth was a big consolidated reality, which we should keep and nurse rather than break up. His inclination was a pleasant surprise to the rest of us and it became a great decision that moved the incorrigible imperialist, Winston Churchill, to tears of joy. Projecting our thoughts from this point we can imagine that it would have been better for the world if other imperial consolidations that had been brought into being through ambition, fraud or force had not been hastily dissolved but rather, exploited for the ultimate good of humanity. Again we cannot dive into the inscrutable play of the Divine Master but must submit and do our relative duties honestly, and reverently strive to take humanity forward in spite of all the difficulties and contrary forces. Internationlism has in great part unfortunately yielded again to reinvigorated nationalism. The spirit of resistance, anger, and hatred generated in the struggle for liberty persist even after liberation when such feelings have no place or meaning. All of this and other difficulties have to be overcome and will be overcome because the good is stronger than the evil, and truth must prevail over error, however seemingly more energetic evil and error may appear to be for a time.

America should not lose interest or faith in the UN or develop a feeling of antagonism to it. What now appear to be setbacks may indeed turn out to be just what was necessary to prevent some greater evil. Let us struggle and God will ultimately help us. His *leela* is no doubt complicated and inscrutable. There is much apparent evil that we cannot explain on the basis of a just and merciful all-powerful guardian of the human species. But what we

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have experienced is enough to prove Him to be good and omnipotent. Let us strive, therefore, with faith in the ultimate result. Let us cultivate serenity and patience and let us act our parts justly in His great and unending play, at each moment doing our duties to one another and to society and humanity as a whole; and even further, by doing our duty to all living beings. Endowed with the wonderful endowment of the human mind, we have duties toward all the living beings on earth with whom we are really one and individual.

Brisk trade is developing between the Western nations and Soviet Russia and her allies, and is operating as a catalyst to dissolve the cold war attitudes. This is a development promising much good, especially when the selling is accompanied by long credit terms.

We can see the difficulties and complications in the administration of a small welfare state. We see the same difficulties multiplied tenfold in the large nation-states. We can do no good without inflicting pain on someone or other. Infinitely more complicated must be the divine administration of the whole planet on any welfare plan. If we extend our thoughts beyond human pain and pleasure and admit that the all-merciful Supreme Master's charge includes also living beings other than man, the complications increase more than a millionfold.

The pain and destruction we inflict on sentient beings to find out and practise methods to relieve human pain and human hunger and wants is immeasurable. Indeed, we are even led to conclude that there is no way of creating pleasure without creating an equal quantum of pain. These thoughts take us back to the inscrutability of the ways of the Master who governs this vast universe of which our planet and the human population on it are an infinitesimal part. Closing our eyes to the dizzy heights of the universe and concentrating our imagination on the problem of man only on this planet, do we not see as plainly as anything can be made plain, that all our difficulties arise out of

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disobedience of the moral law? This moral law is not absolute but relative and flexible to suit every context. There can be no solution for unhappiness except by firm re-establishment of this moral Law. And this is what we should aim at with determined minds.

Notwithstanding every advance made through observation and experiment to unravel the mysteries of the universe in which we live using the superb instrument for investigation with which we are endowed—the human brain—there is an irreducible residue of an unknowable, inscrutable nature. We may spell the inscrutable with a capital letter or we may follow our forefathers' way of spelling it with three simple letters of the alphabet—it comes to the same thing. Darwin summarizes his investigations with the revolutionary laws that, according to him, brought about the infinite number of species of life on earth, with the deeply pious as well as scientific observation that it is no derogation of divinity to discover an evolutionary process at work through millions and millions of years in place of a single act of creation, and that, indeed it is an enhancement of God's almighty character to understand and appreciate the automatic power with which he invested the lowest forms of life to develop ultimately into man, that the law he ordained worked unceasingly and brought about the wonder that we call the universe, and that in this planet it brought into being the marvel that is man and his mind. The discoveries of science, be it in physics or in zoology, cannot do away with the primeval cause—*aadi moolam*, as the Hindus call it to which they offer adoration. That inscrutable gap is an irreducible one. The discoveries of science only enhance the wonder and the inscrutability of the Supreme Being. This humble confession leads to hope and saves us from despair in the midst of the most depressing circumstances. Optimism is not a creed but an inescapable attitude of mind that has an evolutionary function.

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Tree speaks

COLONEL RAY JOHNSON was a member of the I.M.S., short for the Indian Medical Service, which was organised originally as a military-medical arm of the British regime but which settled down as District Medical and Sanitary Officers throughout India. Some of them were very good in their work and exceedingly devoted to their calling. Some were just proud officials. Ray Johnson was posted as District Medical Officer in Salem when I was there. He was a very amiable person though he did not become particularly famous for his medical work.

"He is late in coming today from his evening visits to his friends, the trees. He has been detained for something I am sure," said Mrs. Johnson. "Will you wait or shall I tell him you were here punctually and could not wait?"

"Thank you," I said. "I have to leave. Tell him I am glad to learn of his promotion. I came just to congratulate you both."

"O yes, thank you. It is just routine. Lieut.-Colonels become Colonels by lapse of time. It is nothing special."

The doctor had a habit of talking to the trees on the roadside as he took his walk in the evenings. He would bend intimately and kiss the trees and whisper to them kind words. This was odd but very beautiful to see. One would not like to disturb him by letting him see he was watched in this process of love. If one stood at a distance and watched it was indeed a beautiful thing to see in this naughty world.

That evening, I subsequently learnt, was a sad day for Col. Johnson. One of his tree friends had been felled and lay on the ground stretched out at full length, like a wounded giant.

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"They have killed my tall, beautiful girl," the doctor said to me when I saw him next.

The tree was unfortunately too near the new District Board office building and the engineers advised against letting this tree put out its roots and break up the foundations.

"They say this tree was too near the building. Who asked them to place their building so near the tree? The tree has been growing there these forty years, and this upstart building came to be there only last year," said Col. Johnson, with eyes filling.

"The colonel wants to create a storm over this," said Mrs. Johnson. "What good is it now? The tree has been felled and no one will see things from Ray's angle."

"That is true," I said.

"But surely, surely, when a wrong thing has been done. and you feel it, to suppress your resentment and to stifle protest is to let evil grow unchecked. Civilisation and humanity call for the free expression of one's resentment."

The subject was a delicate one. Ray Johnson felt too strongly for making him see the worldly point of view. And the trouble was he was in the right!

There were quite a few of this type among the sun-dried bureaucrats of those days. Col. Ray Johnson had only one son, a boy who, many years later, died in the Burma campaign fighting the Japanese.

The I.M.S. Colonel's feelings made a deep impression on me. It was the easiest thing for a Hindu to understand; for we Hindus are taught to believe every tree has a life and soul like ourselves. I was attracted to the spot the next day after a late evening at the club. There it was, a great big fallen giant of a pipal tree and I sat down on one of the branches and ruminated. Was each branch a separate life and the tree an uprooted family or was it even bigger than that, each flower having its own soul, the whole tree being a great city? I was immersed in such stupid thoughts when I heard, or thought I heard, the

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soft tunes of a flute. The sound ceased when I began to think about it, but reappeared when I left thinking about it and turned my mind to the fallen tree and to Col. Ray Johnson. It was a melancholy song though it was just the notes of the flute and no words to it.

"It is the spirit of the tree singing. I have no doubt," I said to myself.

That night I had a strange dream. All dreams are strange but this one was very strange.

"Don't think this is a dream," said the tree. "You can't see me, but I am here. Don't you hear me distinctly?"

"Yes I hear you. Go on, please," I said.

"Here I am, killed, murdered. I want you to take up my cause. My brother, the doctor, is not able to do anything because he is a Government servant. But you are free, you are a lawyer. They paid treble coolie rates to coax the men who at first refused to cut me down. The silver pieces seduced the good men."

"What can I do? The judge will not take up the case.' I began, you see, to fall in line with the stupid spirit of the tree. It happens in dreams.

"Stupid! There is a Judge who will hear all cases. Are you an atheist?" asked the tree-spirit.

"Yes, I will take it up and write to the newspapers," I said.

"Yes, do so. I was a young aswattha sapling once upon a time. The Huzur Shiristadar then was Subbayyar, a grand man with a fine red turban with gold lace in it; his wife used to come and put sandal paste and kumkum on my trunk and utter prayers that her son might be cured. He was suffering from a bad fever weeks and weeks and lay unconscious sometimes. But he got well. Then Subbayyar himself came and gave a feast to the poor folk who sat around and ate, making a great noise. Those were great days. But now I have been slaughtered. Will you abandon me?"

I woke up and it was then that I made up my mind to

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write a strong letter to the Press about the folly of felling old trees.

My letter appeared in the Madras *Mail*. The members of the Bar were amused. One of them was angry.

"Sir, when we are all agitating about Home Rule, you write about tree-felling. Is this not frivolous? Have you no sense of proportion?"

I pleaded guilty and in extenuation said I felt much about it. I did not tell them about my dream as I knew they would laugh and refer to my digestion.

"Here is Lala Lajpati Rai deported to Mandalay, or we don't know where, and you write about a road-side tree being cut down," said the President of the Bar Association and he left the company in a fit of anger and hopelessness about me.

Those were great days, and I took part in all the public agitations. But I did not regret writing about the pipal tree.

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Gandhiji

Nobody stood closer to Gandhiji or knew his mind better than Rajaji. There is a touch of subdued sadness in Rajaji's appraisal of the Mahatma's stature and his role in our national life.

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Votary of Truth

MAHATMA GANDHI was a votary of Truth and non-violence. Truth and non-violence combined make what is called in our scriptures *satya-dharma*. Gandhiji was truly a *satyadharma Parakramah*.

There is a fascinating verse in Valmiki's *Ramayana* which, although in the context it is only conversation of a matter-of-fact type, has a remarkable fragrance of philosophy. Visvamitra and the princes of Ayodhya reached the river Sona, on their way to Mithila. In answer to a query of Rama as to how they were to ford the stream, the Rishi said:

एष पन्था मयोद्दिष्टो येन यान्ति महर्षयः ।

The fascination of this verse arises out of its close resemblance to the famous Upanishad mantra from which the motto of the Union of India has been taken:

> The path that the Rishis, undisturbed by unrealized desires, take, the bright path that leads to the supreme abode of Reality, that path is paved with Truth; Victory is for Truth ever, never for un-Truth.

Truth is the means to reach the supreme goal. Anything that is not True cannot take one to it.

It is the sure road the Seers have always taken. Let us take the road where the Maharshis go, said Visvamitra to the princes. And so says the *Mundakopanishad* Rishi to us all.

The quest for Truth in the material or phenomenal world is what science pursues. Modern methods of science strictly fulfil the Rishi's injunction. Without pride, without bias created by unfulfilled ambitions which lead to error, with concern only for truth, and adopting ways strictly in accordance with truth, science unravels the mysteries of nature and is fully rewarded.

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The quest for Truth in the non-material world is different from the scientific quest. Here we face the unknowable and not merely the unknown as in science. What the approach should be is indicated in a verse in the *Isha* Upanishad which is beautiful as it is profound.

O, Pushan, open for me the golden urn and disclose the Truth that is encased in it, the Truth that is also Dharma.

This attitude of humility and prayer is necessary for obtaining the vision of Truth that we seek in this field of eternal mystery beyond science. To be blessed with a glimpse of the supreme Reality behind everything, one must live a pure life in thought, word and action, retaining sensuous desires until one is free from even the thought of them. No unfulfilled desire should disturb his mind. It should be *aaptakaamaah*.

The superficial thinker may wonder what need there is for truth and penance, and freedom from desire in order to see what must be seen. But the good and the godly man free from every sin, he only, not the professor of logic or philosophy or grammar or literature, can obtain the vision. He must be free from desires unfulfilled, *aaptakaamaah*. Not merely should he discard objects of sensuous enjoyment, but he must be free from the memory of their taste and the thought of them. This total freedom from sin comes only when the mind is directed towards the Supreme Being.

Paramadrshtvaa, turning the inner eye to the Supreme, not otherwise.

October 2 and January 30 cannot be better observed than by a re-dedication to Truth and non-violence to the extent we are, each one of us, capable of and by a prayer for increased strength of heart in order to be more and more devoted to that ideal. There may be external rituals of homage to Gandhiji, but they must be accompanied by dedication to *satya-dharma*, and a prayerful mind behind it.

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Gandhiji's answer to Marxism

I adhere to my doctrine of trusteeship in spite of the ridicule that has been poured upon it.

MAHATMA GANDHI

As the citizen's duty of non-violent disobedience enunciated by Thoreau was the basis of the Gandhian struggle against foreign rule, the basis of the Gandhian answer to the modern challenge in the welfare State is the duty of compassion.

The fulfilment of the citizen's duty of disobedience led to freedom from foreign rule and the realization of India's self. The fulfilment of the duty of compassion enunciated in the Upanishads and the *Gita* and reformulated by Gandhiji will lead to the liberty of the individual and freedom from totalitarian governance. A nation enjoying the blessings of minimum government and citizens fulfilling the law of compassion—this was Gandhiji's answer to the challenge of Marxism.

The duty of compassion is based on religion and flows from an inescapable God-given urge leading to a true oneness of all life. The identity of oneself with those around should be realized without any external compulsion, and without losing one's own identity in the process.

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥

As a result of the long continued impact of the baser elements of Western civilization, the glamour of the new and expanding knowledge of the physical world which came as a well-intentioned gift from the West and the onslaught of

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proselytizing propaganda, India has almost lost her religion. When faith is corrupted by doubts and undermined in the heart, the preservation of ritual does not make up for the loss. There is little of true religion left in the strata permeated by Western influence. But so far as the nation is concerned, it is not wholly lost. If the educated classes, the leaders of society, recover their souls there is time yet to recover lost ground; and recovered life may even be stronger than the damaged previous possession. India can recover her faith in the values of spirit that her Rishis laid down for the people. It depends on whether the need is recognized by her leaders and the urgency of it realized. If this is done and the discipline of compassion becomes the way of life, we shall be enabled to present an answer to the challenge of the times so far as India is concerned and also set an example to the world.

Marxism, the communists claim, is the only answer to the challenge of the times. We are not prepared to accept that claim. Not only do we consider the violence that historically preceded that way of life, wherever it has been imposed, as a great evil, but we do not want the individual to become a lifeless screw in a vast machine called the State, and that too under continuing State-compulsion. The individual is the only reality. The State is a non-living entity. The Leviathan has no soul. If the individual is wiped out we reduce the nation to a soulless existence.

It is claimed by 'socialists' that theirs is the alternative answer to the challenge of the times. Reject Marxism, but accept 'socialism' they say. But what is socialism but pure and simple State-compulsion? In the result the individual dies in the one as in the other. Indeed it is an illusion that the two are different and that the one is an alternative to the other. That it is possible to establish 'socialism' without the violence that accompanied communism but through democratic process does not make it different. Whether the individual is violently made to die,

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or accepts death without resistance, the resulting death is the same. The individual ceases to exist whether it is murder or suicide.

If we wish to retain the individual and attain the general welfare with his fullest co-operation, the only way is what religion has from time immemorial taught—the duty and discipline of compassion. The sharing of one's goods with those around one, and of their joys and sorrows, can be done without handing over your soul to a lifeless machine, and as an activity that yields joy to the giver as well as the receiver. It is not necessary for a mother to die for a child to be born. The mother lives for the child she has given birth to without herself losing her life. So also can the individual live and 'die' each moment for the community without losing his life, if the natural law of love and compassion were allowed to work. Compassion is a God-given endowment which makes each life feel the pain of another and find the pleasure in relieving it as if it were its own pain relieved. If this urge that is in every heart is not killed but made into a way of life, it is the answer to the challenge of the times. The communists always called their way of life socialism. The Congress's socialist pattern and the Government's plans to achieve that pattern may not be introduced with bloodshed but carried out through parliamentary sanction. But the end is the same—a soulless Leviathan taking possession of all personal life and strangling it to death except for whatever life is needed to work as a self. Along with this, compassion itself is killed.

The socialism envisaged by the Government of India, if it is worked with energy and meets with no casualty by reason of corruption, mismanagement and bureaucratic wastefulness or for want of foreign aid, will lead to exactly the same nation-wide state of compulsion and serfdom as we condemn communism for. There is no socialist country in the world which has achieved its aim without wiping out the individual and atrophying the human mind,

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without converting the entire community into a body of slaves, without creating a privileged class to run the machine. India's experiment even if successful will only end in that result.

The true alternative to the Marxian answer to the call of the times is not an illusory copy of it, or a preparation for surrendering to it, but something quite different in character and in its fundamental basis. The doctrine of trusteeship adumbrated by Gandhiji, namely, that rich people should hold their superfluous wealth as trustees for the poor and that this way of life should be inculcated by example as well as precept without compulsion or cruelty is the only true alternative to Marxism. It is entirely different in character from the Marxian solution. It is based on religion, the antithesis of which is the Marxian foundation.

Gandhiji had no time to expand and illustrate the way of life which he adumbrated. But he definitely put it forward as his alternative both to Marxism and socialism.

> Indeed at the root of this doctrine of equal distribution must lie that of the trusteeship of the wealthy for superfluous wealth possessed by them. How is this to be brought about? Non-violently? Or should the wealthy be dispossessed of their possessions? To do this we would naturally have to resort to violence. This violent action cannot benefit society. Society will be the poorer, for it will lose the gifts of a man who knows how to accumulate wealth. Therefore, the non-violent way is evidently superior. The rich man will be left in possession of his wealth, of which he will use what he reasonably requires for his personal needs and will act as a trustee for the remainder to be used for society. In this argument honesty on the part of the trustee is assumed.

> Those who own money now are asked to behave like the trustees holding their riches on behalf of the poor.

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> You may say that trusteeship is a legal fiction. But, if people meditate over it constantly and try to act up to it, then life on earth would be governed far more by love than it is at present. Absolute trusteeship is an abstraction like Euclid's definition of a point, and is equally unattainable. But if we strive for it, we shall be able to go further in realizing a state of equality on earth than by any other method.
>
> Complete renunciation of one's possessions is a thing which very few even among ordinary folk are capable of. All that can legitimately be expected of the wealthy class is that they should hold their riches and talents in trust and use them for the service of society. To insist on more would be to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs.

It is not on mere authority that this solution is presented now. It is presented on its own merits for acceptance as a way of life which would be in accordance with the ancient *dharma* of our land and save the nation from chaos and oppression and loss of soul. It is a way of life, besides, that will give true happiness such as is not available otherwise.

It may seem that what is suggested is to hand over the whole problem to the sweet will and pleasure of the rich. It is not the case at all. When *dharma* is made to prevail over the land, misconduct invites the great and powerful sanction of social obloquy and personal unhappiness. It is the only non-violent way of reaching our goal. Any other would end in soul-killing compulsion. Any form of compulsion to produce the behaviour we seek to establish is not a way of life, but just prison discipline. A way of life must be voluntary and this means we should bring about a change of heart among people in general which is the function of a revival of religion in its true and substantial sense.

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The question is whether we want a way of life or only prison discipline. We have seen prisons and know what they are like. No argument should be necessary to prefer that which alone can produce a way of life, viz., a revival of *dharma* and re-installation of higher values, and in particular the revivification of love and compassion inherent in human nature which has only been suppressed and overwhelmed, not destroyed by the incrustation of so much that is contrary to it. The pain that one automatically feels at the sight of another's pain is an inescapable gift of God to the human soul, though the gift is in the nature of a pain and a burden. It is a natural urge that makes a person one with those around him. Out of this fundamental pain or urge issues the doctrine of holding the goods one holds as in trust for others also and not only for oneself. Such a trust is a joy and a privilege to the individual.

Compassion based on *dharma* is a noble urge different from the vulgarity of condescension. It is a way of life that forges a union. Co-operation is good, but it is only joint adventure. Compassion welds people into a single and indivisible entity. Unity with those around one, with individuated life for oneself, is the secret of healthy citizenship. The individual should live fully, eagerly and purposefully and not become just a bolt or a screw or a lifeless brick, lost in a machine or a masonry construction. If this is to be achieved, neither Socialism nor Marxism is the way but only the *dharma* re-emphasized by Gandhiji.

To revive and strengthen religion and the consciousness of pious obligation would achieve general welfare and happiness preserving the spirit of industry as well as of brotherhood, without damaging the value of individual human personality or the graces of life. This is better than trying to achieve our object through the deadening influence of organizational compulsion even were it granted that it could achieve the goal.

What is recommended may seem to be a long road but *shorter roads do not lead to the goal* though they may give

sadistic satisfaction. The long road leads to the goal and as we go along it we find and give joy and betterment all along at every stage and what we do binds the people together as no compulsion can do, be it brute force or the coercion of status.

No doubt, the fanaticism brought about by bloodshed and cruelty can produce a new way of life without waiting long. But if we do not like this, there is no choice. If we do not want subterfuge, widespread discontent and corruption, and failure, we must go through the long road. Spurious imitations and eye-washes can be achieved easily but big things cannot be reached non-violently except through the long road. We must patiently work and attain the widespread spiritual conviction which is the essential basis and condition for making an ancient people accept a way of life not based on compulsion. We must put forth the stamina and personal conviction and the patience required for leading a religious and spiritual revolution. Fortunately the way of life we want is not wholly dissociated from the highest traditions of the land and the revolution we desire is only a re-assertion of the principles of religion this nation has always unquestioningly accepted.

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Meaning of culture

The essays in this group convey Rajaji's thought on the meaning of culture and the traditional values. He points out how self-control is the characteristic note of Indian culture, a self-control which leads to knowledge of the self in terms of human freedom, the free functioning of the imaginative sensibility leading to an awareness of beauty and the true joy of life.

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Essentials of Indian culture

THE pattern of life in any country is generally called its 'culture'—the pattern of life, not necessarily at its best, but all of it that is good and pleasing in some measure. Everything goes into it, such as drama, folk dance, dress, eating and drinking habits, manners and marriage customs. I would deem this, however, to be a loose kind of classification. We usually want to see something different from our own way of living. So we emphasize those odd things of a pleasing kind wherein communities of people differ from one another. We dance and sing and clothe ourselves in one way, other people do all or some of these in another style. Each of these different ways we call a national culture and we form associations for mutual entertainment, and for the encouragement of these odd varieties of national culture. It is a sign of goodwill and quite good as far as it goes. It helps 'tourism' which is good in its over-all effects.

But I would say that culture is truly and essentially self-restraint, *aatmoupamyam*. To understand what the other person feels and to react helpfully : this is culture in all lands, including one's own. Without this, you may dance, sing and do anything else, but there cannot be any true culture.

The most striking feature one observes in Indian behaviour, different from that of people in other countries, is the positive tolerance of people in respect of everything—dress, music, manners and worship. This general tolerance of all variations makes India a distinctly restful land, free from tension. All foreigners—provided they are not approached and bothered

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and how to raise her average national income—find a peace and restfulness in this country which they do not find elsewhere.

While there is great tolerance for variations, there is a strong demand for conformity within each group in India. This is a paradox. But it is this that preserves the multiple variety and at the same time the separate identity of each. There is no proselytizing ardour or desire to steam-roll all non-conformities into one uniform type. In fact such tendencies are discouraged and have no chance of growth in India. The very multiplicity of types prevailing baffles the monotypist reformer. He can never hope to achieve a monotype in India. I should say that the monotypist is a fool to believe that his creed of uniformity will make for happiness. It may make for easy government and consolidation of national strength against outside aggression. It may make for energetic chauvinism, and make war and defence more easy. But it is not what makes happiness. We have long allowed the prevalence of variations and that is the key to happiness. It is a school for tolerance in the largest sense.

Of course, happiness may be shattered by aggression from outside, made easier by the tolerance I have described. But that is another matter. I am dealing with culture and not with priorities. Maybe, sometimes culture has to take a back seat.

The multiplicity of idols and symbols and the general sacredness attached to them in this country baffle and confuse the outsider as a contradiction to the very spirit of agelong Indian philosophy. But it is this contradiction and seeming paradox that helps form a vast laboratory for God-realization in India, and a school to cast off the error of anthropomorphism to which man is congenitally inclined in this field. The domestic variations and a long and happy experience of life on that basis have trained us to automatic and positive tolerance generally, even in

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regard to religions and symbols from abroad. They have schooled us to a fuller and deeper understanding of truth. What in scientific research is called 'the method of difference' is psychologically applied by Hindu tradition in the quest of the Ultimate Reality.

We worship God in the strangest forms conceivable. And to impress the truth that God is not for man alone, we portray and cherish the legends of worship offered by monkey, bird and elephant. God is sought in a medley of forms, for God is a Supreme Medley. The worshippers, too, are in our mythology a strange medley ; not only humans, but birds and beasts also have been holy *bhaktas*. Nothing can be more effective in the art of getting rid of the anthropomorphic error than the mythology of India in which God is Paramesvara, with a complexion like flaming fire, and also Sri Rama and Sri Krishna who are dark and beautiful. God is a boar, a fish, a tortoise, a lion-man, an elephant-headed one, a *brahmachari*-youth, a Trivikrama measuring out the Universe in three strides—in fact God is anything and everything.

All these varieties of shape and size impress on us God's formlessness and incomprehensibility, His transcendent quality as well as His all-pervasiveness. And this, not by teaching alone, but by developing a practical association of ideas in the minds of the pious and making what is ugly into something beautiful, and what is lowly into something inexpressibly holy. That God is formless can be taught best through realizing Him in a hundred different forms. That He is everywhere can be best realized, not by refusing Him a house or an image, but by lodging Him in a thousand forms, and showing the potency of worship in each and all of those forms and through the scientific method of difference, demonstrating the non-essentiality of forms and symbols and rites.

Goethe had a friend, Johann Caspar Lavater, who believed that Christ was the only true messenger of God and

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that all other religions were false. Goethe vigorously opposed this attitude. He wrote to Lavater :

> You find nothing more beautiful than the Gospels, I find thousands of records written in all ages by men inspired by God just as beautiful and useful, indispensable to mankind. Be assured, dear brother, I am as much in earnest about my beliefs as you are about yours. If I had to express myself publicly, I would speak and write about what I believe to be this God-inspired aristocracy as zealously as you write of the Kingdom of Christ. Exclusive intolerance! Forgive this harsh expression. I should like to say the intolerance is in your book, not in you.

It is stupid to be ashamed of what is wrongly called 'polytheism' or to find absurd 'historical' reasons for the blend. The earliest scriptures and hymns of India speak of One Supreme Being and the same revel also in a multiplicity of symbols and forms. This multiplicity is not just a fleeting image in the course of an argument or exposition. It is positive, concrete, passionate devotion to God in each of those forms, sometimes exhibited even in fanatic intensity. Yet there is no question of war between the varying idols and symbols, but a tacit and wise acceptance of all the forms, symbols and rites as equally holy for each worshipper concerned. This is the triumph of religion in India. It is at the root of our culture and feeds it as the roots of a great spreading tree.

Of course, no thoughts on our culture can be complete without a reference to the emphasis we lay on gifts to the poor, on attachment to the family and to relatives near and distant, on hospitality, on chastity, on compassion, on respect for parents, elders and teachers. These are not perhaps in conformity with economic doctrines or with the philosophy of individual comfort, but they are essential to Indian culture, and it is not improbable that economic

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philosophy, too, may come back to them. Culture can never promote, but is always opposed to selfishness or physical pleasures. Indeed, culture consists in the sacrifice of these things. The more automatic that sacrifice, the greater the culture. Multiplication of wants is the opposite of culture.

Returning to fundamentals, let me end by repeating that Indian culture is self-restraint, which is Yoga. The rebellious self can never be completely disciplined, but the constant effort in daily life to control and restrain it, is what we call culture. It makes us companionable, and thereby life becomes pleasant for everyone. We cannot wish for culture in others, ourselves escaping from it.

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Self-control is culture

CULTURE is not just art or literature or dancing or music or painting as it prevails among a people. It is the pattern of behaviour generally accepted by a people. Culture is far removed from freedom. No man of culture feels free. He imposes on himself all sorts of restraints. So then, the culture of a people is the pattern of restraints which that people have, as a whole, after trial and error, through generations settled down to accept in the interest of social order and happiness. There is joy and pride in the acceptance of such restraints and no resentment or pain. In that sense there is freedom in culture as an essential part of it. It is this which distinguishes culture from State regulation. State-regulation began as a protest against the anarchy created by indiscriminate individual freedom and the greed and competition that resulted from it. The practice of State-regulation has resulted in the discovery of several evils, in the remedy worse than the disease. In the cycle of human progress, the slogan of freedom has, therefore, been raised as a counter to excessive State regulation. The one comes from Moscow and the other from America. But neither the slogan of 'freedom' nor the slogan of State regulation can solve the difficulties of humanity. The right slogan is self-control and that is the message of Indian philosophy, and the culture that can be claimed by India as its own.

Every culture is based on and bound up with a definite idea. The culture of Greece was bound up with the sense of beauty. The culture of Rome was developed round the sense of order and law. The culture of India is built round the central idea of self-control. The way of life,

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the pattern of behaviour accepted as correct and esteemed by the people of India as worthy, by the common folk as well as by the enlightened, is the way of self-control as laid down in the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita and emphasised in recent times, with the whole force of a political revolution behind it, by Mahatma Gandhi.

Therefore, before we discuss culture on the Indian background, it is necessary to dwell on the essentials of it even if it may seem we are using the occasion for a religious discourse. The first two verses of *Isavasya Upanishad* put this down in simple and brief language.

God pervades everything in this world.

Īśāvāsyamidaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat|
tena tyaktena bhuñjithāḥ mā gṛdhaḥ kasyasvid dhanaṁ||
Kurvanneveha karmāṇi jijīviṣechckataṁ samāḥ|
evaṁ tvayi nānyathetosti na karma lipyate nare||

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम् ॥
कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्ययेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥

Asūryā nāma te lokā Andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ|
tānste pretyābhigacchanti ye ke cātmahano janāḥ||
Yastu sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmanyevānupaśyati|
sarvabhūteṣu cātmānaṁ tato na vijugupsate||
Yāthātathyataḥ arthān vyadadhāt śāśvatībhyah samābhyaḥ||

असूर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसावृताः ।
तांस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः ॥
यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥
याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान् व्यदधात् शाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः ॥

Dedicate everything to Him while doing the things you do and enjoying the things you possess. Do not entertain covetous desires.

Life involves necessarily activity and work. Work

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involves necessarily some evil or other, particularly attachment to the fruits of activity. If one must work, as one must live, there is no other way to escape the contamination of evil except by dedication of all activities to the all-pervading Supreme Spirit.

Whatever you do, do it as an act of dedication to God, be it small or be it big, whether it is trivial business or is a thing of great and general importance. This is how Brother Lawrence is said to have lived. Even when cooking or scrubbing the floor or cleaning the vessels, he did his work in company with his God. He worked and he laughed with God by his side.

There is a soul in the body that functions in the material world. He who denies the soul and identifies it with the body and thus kills his own soul will find the world all dark and without any light to guide his steps.

Why? Because his mind is led by desires and will wander into evil and grief. The soul can conquer the wandering mind and the senses. It can control the senses and prevent their attachment to sensuous pleasures which lead men to ruin. All that one thinks to be other than oneself, moving or unmoving, near or far, should be seen and realised to be part of oneself. The sense of separation from those around you should be overcome.

What I have explained is a rendering of the first six verses of the *Iśāvāsya Upanishad* and it is also the teaching of the Gita. The Upanishad proceeds to explain that by the result of the life and discipline taught therein, one will attain equanimity and reach knowledge and the power of enjoying all that comes to one to the best advantage. You will thereby, says the Upanishad, properly enjoy the things of enjoyment for years and years, that is, in the right way and not leading to pain and grief.

All Indian culture is bound up with this doctrine of self-control based on a recognition of the existence and the functioning of a soul within and pervading the material casement.

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Civilisation in modern times has developed into and identified itself with man's control over his environment, man's control over nature. In the pursuit of this objective, civilisation has forgotten the prime requisite for happiness, namely, control over oneself. We have learnt very greatly how to control nature, but we have not learnt how to control ourselves. Control over nature and man's environment has extended beyond all expectations and has in recent years spread out to a dangerous field, namely, to the obtaining of psychological power over the minds of men and women. Humanity is reduced to the condition of material nature and the rulers of the world have developed a technique to control the minds of men and women, even as they have succeeded in controlling material nature. The attempt to control the minds of men and women, as if they were raw material like coal and iron, took shape in Hitlerism and communism.

If civilisation means happiness, this must not be permitted. If men and women are reduced to something like coal and iron, where are moral values, the weights and measures by which we judge progress and civilisation? Moral values cannot be allowed to become the plaything of psychological technique.

The culture of a people is essentially the prevailing pattern of joyous restraint accepted by the people. If this is so, what then does freedom of culture, for which your organisation stands, mean? Does your conception of freedom contradict self-restraint? I think not. I consider the slogan of your organisation means only this—that restraint should be developed from within, in accordance with truth, to replace the restraints that are imposed by the State. Truth is another name for moral values. Truth should not be sacrificed at the altar of other objectives. It is to this, I think, you give the name of cultural freedom. Freedom does not mean licence, absence of self-restraint. No one can be free of the restraints imposed by moral values;

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nothing can claim liberation from the shackles of truth—the chains imposed by moral values.

Now, Hitler claimed when he was in power and the communists claim that truth is not an inviolable temple. Their activities, past and present, are based on the conviction that truth is just what we agree to be truth and nothing more permanent than that. This cannot be accepted. When you stand for freedom of culture, I presume you claim that no direction should be given to culture in disregard of the respect that is due to truth, that is in disregard of moral values.

Now, there are some who argue that truth continually grows, that it is not static, that it is ever a matter for further research and, therefore, there is no sense in talking about the absolute essentiality of regard for truth or for moral values. I agree that truth is not entirely disclosed to man but there is such a thing as an unalterable desire to seek the truth and unqualified respect for what we, for the time being, believe to be the truth. The opposite approach is that we do not know the ultimate truth and, therefore, what the ruling party has decided to be good for the people is the truth.

What I most dislike in communism is the deterioration it works in moral values and the respect for truth. When regulations lose the life-giving governance of moral values and when indoctrination is deemed lawful and proper in order that some objective may be reached, then there is loss of freedom which your organisation and all of us deplore. And this is what happens when communism is allowed to rule. This is what we have in mind when we say that freedom is lost in communist-ruled countries. God is dethroned in those countries as the first necessary step to dethrone truth and in order that nothing may stand in the way of whatever the ruling party decides on such data as are accepted by them as good for the people. In fact, 'the people' is a phrase that has, with communists, replaced moral values. Of all the slogans that I dislike, I dislike

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most this misleading slogan of 'the people'. It is sought to replace every moral value, everything sacred. Even justice in judicial matters is according to the communists, justice only when an indoctrinated crowd shouts it. The party that has got hold of power makes the people what they are, if not in one generation, in two or three. And this was sought to be done secretly before, but it is openly done now. In fact, it is acclaimed to be lawful education. The difference between culture as we understand it and culture as developed in communist countries is this that we respect truth and have regard for moral values which are deemed inviolable.

It may be that everything is relative and we have to be content with truth as we know or believe it to be. But it is something to love what we regard as truth. It is disgusting altogether to shape life not caring for moral values. You know that a child grows. It will be, in course of time, quite different from what it is now. But you love it with all your heart. You do not stint in your love or in your attention because the child will grow into a big man later on. Truth grows but we must love it at all stages and not regard it as an illusion. I consider that this is the meaning of the slogan of freedom by which this organisation swears.

But, for my own part, I would love it that instead of making freedom the banner of our struggle against communism, we set up self-control, that is the restraint of our activities based on moral values as our battle standard. Not freedom which may deteriorate into licence and anarchy, not State regulation which may deteriorate into tyranny, but self-control is the right slogan. As against the culture of unrestricted liberty which is the slogan on one side and the culture of all-round State-regulation which is the slogan on the other side, India stands for self-control, which is neither freedom nor regulation from outside. This is what Gandhiji stood for, what the Bhagavad Gita preached and what was solemnly voiced forth in the ancient Upaṅishads. This alone will save the world from anarchy

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as well as from the slavery of totalitarianism. To cultivate self-control, faith in Divine rule is an indispensable pre-requisite condition of mind; without it, we may talk of self-control but it is not possible. Only when it is based on faith in Divine rule, that self-control will be a joy and a fulfilment and progressively increase, instead of being pain and travail and remaining so all the time.

The culture of India is based on and bound up with self-control. It is the characteristic fundamental of Indian thought. It is this alone that can establish true freedom, not to be confused with the free play of individual ambitions. It is self-restraint, control from within, that makes art artistic, beauty beautiful and order orderly and enjoyable.

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Traditional values

I AM a superstitious person in the etymological sense of the term, a revivalist, everything unintellectual. I believe in some things not related to reason and rationality. I believe reason and rationality cannot cover all things and some of them are too important to be ignored. My irrationality is fairly well known now and therefore will not unduly disturb readers.

If one does not believe in a soul, individual or cosmic, one must wander in deep darkness. The world for such a one will be sunless.

asurya naama te lokaa andhena tamasaavrtaa
taanste pretyaabhigachchanti ye ke cha aatmahanojanaah

—ISA UPANISHAD

Those who (in their minds) do away with the soul die their deaths (by that denial) and go about wandering in sunless worlds, dense darkness over-hanging.

If man has only a body and no surviving soul, there can be no values—only pleasure and pleasure-producing objects remain. Shall we hang on to life for these? Then remains the question why should we work for the good of humanity that is, for future generations? Why must one do anything for them? What binds one to do it? And why should even humanity or future generations live and struggle if there is no soul but only body? Indeed, if there is no soul, all values disappear for each one of us and for all of us.

Let me get out of my superstitions for a moment. Let me talk the language of evolution, taking for granted that man came after millions of years through countless accidental mutations of the genes during the period and that, through natural selection, he became man as he is today. Values

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such as honesty, fellow-feeling, respect for life, respect for contracts, the co-operative spirit, compassion, gratitude, etc. grew up and fixed themselves in man's mental make-up because they had all great survival value. If we reject them, it would be like the lion and the tiger discarding their reckless ferocity, or like the birds throwing away their wings, or the bull its horns or man himself casting away his brains and his upright posture. The values men so greatly cherish are evolutionary products and it is well we stick to them. They are all-important for man's survival and progress.

What go by the name of "traditional values" are values prevailing all the world over but differing in degree from nation to nation. Where secular forces and institutions have come to cover the same values, the traditional character of some of them may have got blurred or forgotten.

If destructive scepticism develops over these traditional values and a movement to discard them should succeed, man would go back to the condition he emerged from by the grace of accidents; and he will be but a poor and feeble wild beast, and probably disappear from the face of the earth. What I have said must have been said by some people long ago, although I have not read it. I guess Herbert Spencer must have said it and must have said it much better.

But as could be guessed from what I have confessed at the outset, I do not accept the theory of blind blundering evolution. I believe there is design in it of some inscrutable kind and these values are therefore part of man's divinely designed being. They will not, I believe, be given up by mankind although some men may discard them and suffer for it. Secularly enforced laws can never adequately take the place of traditionally inherited values.

It is pretty easy to sit in one's study and indict traditional values in the light of modern life and reason, and derive therefrom intellectual satisfaction and a sense of conquest. We are safe as long as the mass of our people are loyal to these values, the criticism of intellectuals notwithstanding.

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The civilization and culture from which we derive whatever happiness we get in life is one knitted fabric. And what a sorry state a knitting is reduced to, when the yarn that runs through and holds all the loops comes out in one of the corners; to that same state will our civilization and culture be reduced and disappear if our traditional values are discarded by the mass of our people.

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Steam-rolling of cultures

IF YOU WISH to be a man of culture, you should try to forget your own self and keep the other fellow always in mind. It is only if the ego disappears from one's consciousness that one attains the high characteristics of a cultured person. This applies as much to women as to men, to boys as well as to girls.

Being good in the positive sense is the essence of culture. To be cultured in behaviour is a positive achievement, not just avoiding sin.

These days culture has got mixed up with arts, music, dancing, painting, sculpture, etc. We cannot help accepting this broader denotation. Words must after all be accepted in the sense in which most people have accepted them. That is the law of language. Culture is not only the conduct and behaviour of a good man but includes love of arts.

Now there are some who wish to work for an integrated world culture. It is a very interesting issue, assuming that a single unified culture is practicable, whether it is a good thing to aim at such a unified culture.

A unified code of morals can be drafted for acceptance. Indeed all religions have done it. But culture, as I said before, is different from mere moral behaviour. Culture is made up of positive conceptions—dos and not don'ts only. Whereas moral codes generally speaking consist of don'ts. Don'ts can be uniform for all peoples. But dos must differ from place to place, from people to people. The culture of a people is what has grown among them to be recognized as contributing to the joy and happiness of the people as a whole—contributing positively, although

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not coming under the direction of law or government. Morality is governed both by social opinion and law. But culture is something free and positive. Laws and governments aim at preventing unhappiness but culture is what contributes positively to joy.

Compassion, for instance, is positive and contributes to happiness at both ends. No one is sought to be punished by the courts for not being compassionate. Compassion in various degrees and forms is a part of the culture pattern of a people. Vegetarianism is based on compassion. It is not merely a hygienic issue. The Tamil scripture Kural puts it clearly: If people did not eat meat, no one would take the trouble of slaughtering animals. The butcher is the product of the meat-eating habit of people.

Helping one's distant relations and one's clansmen is a part of the culture of the people of India from time immemorial. It has not yet completely disappeared. No one could be punished for not doing it. But he who did not fall in line with that element of our culture was looked upon as a brute, whatever his rank in society. In spite of the growing pressure of the Western culture of individualism and the terrible pressure of the cost of living, the Indian culture of helping one's relations near and distant has not yet completely disappeared, doing more service than Governmental socialism.

Robbery, stealing, cheating are infringements of the moral code and are infringements of the legal code also. Not to cheat is not culture. It is just avoiding a crime. But to be helpful and not to be completely immersed in looking after oneself is culture. Helpfulness expands in widening circles in proportion to one's capacity to be helpful. Help a few people, those nearest to you, if you are not able to do more. But if you are able to do it, help a wider circle. This is Hindu culture both in the North and the South. Indeed I may claim that the oldest literature of the South lays great emphasis on this. 'ஒப்புரவு' is the Kural word for this important element of Hindu

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culture. We should preserve this word as a precious heritage. 'கற்றன் தறா அன்' is the concrete result of this principle of 'ஒப்புரவு'. Be like a sweet-water reservoir or a fruit-bearing tree in the middle of the village, said the author of Kural. It is a pity that as a result of the impact of Western individualism, this part of Hindu culture is rapidly disappearing.

Other examples of positive behaviour falling within the ambit of culture are hospitality, the readiness to receive guests and callers at any time, which marks Hindu and Islamic culture. Alms-giving is a striking feature in Indian and Semitic cultures. It is part of our general culture and not merely individual generosity. The utter loyalty of wife to husband, the utter obedience of sons to parents, are also essential elements in Hindu culture. Western culture laid emphasis on self-help, individuality and the assertion of equality and liberty, which are also quite justifiable, but go contrary to the Hindu cultural elements of wide helpfulness, loyalty to husband and obedience to parents. Boiled down all things may come to be the same. But measure and emphasis make all the difference.

Now taking up the question posed by me at the outset, it is obvious that the various peoples, who have lived and grown in relatively independent ways in the various parts of the globe where they have lived for thousands of years, have developed different cultures with features and emphases differing from one another, although a common humanity makes all people alike fundamentally. Western culture differs from Eastern, Semitic culture from Hindu culture, Indian culture from Siamese and Chinese and Japanese cultures. Indeed the culture of North America differs from British or European culture, due to living for a long time in circumstances different from those of the mother countries. Rajasthan culture is different from Thanjavur culture, Coimbatore culture is different from Tirunelveli culture, and so on. Is it a good thing to grind all these cultures into one world culture, behaviour, dancing,

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singing, painting, etc., all to be one admirable standardized pattern?

Things that come into mutual contact tend to rub off angles and become similar and merge. Synthesis is natural. This natural evolution of sameness cannot be prevented. But is it good to accelerate and intensify this process, or is it good to keep harmless differences going? Is the preservation of distinctions in cultural features a good thing, or must we seek to remove them as quickly as possible and work for a common world pattern? Does it help the totality of human joy to maintain these differences that have grown naturally, or would it be conducive to greater joy if we reduced them all to sameness and uniformity?

The form in which I have posed the question must have made it clear already that I would rather like to maintain these differing characteristics in culture, so as to increase the joy of life. A Persian carpet with its multiple colours and chequered pattern is more beautiful than a single-colour durree. Not only several types of music, or of dancing or of other entertainments, but several differing but harmless types of human behaviour in my opinion add to happiness and joy on the whole, not uniformity.

Let me here refer to the dynamic element of emulation which is roused by proximity and freedom of evolution without being restrained by the goal of uniformity or integration. Progress in the fields where human behaviour and talent count, as they do in the cultural fields, is greatly accelerated and augmented by competition. Like production in the industrial field, the cultural arts are assisted by competition. They tend towards stagnation under standardization.

The German example in history is a striking demonstration of what I have said. Before the days of Bismarck, and for some time even during his Chancellorship, Germany was divided into numerous politically independent States, some of them exhibiting even active hostility towards Prussia, which was beginning to emerge in the eyes of the

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German nation as the hope and standard-bearer of political unification. In other parts of Germany there was no drive towards this kind of unity. But all of them have contributed to the progress of the arts and science, winning for the nation a respected place among civilized mankind long before a unified German Reich came into being.

The German record of culture demonstrates that it is not uniformity and merger but healthy competition which is the live force bringing about the rich growth of culture. Not only in Germany, but in Italy also we can see the same phenomenon of national culture richly growing in spite of division into numerous politically independent regions. Competition in culture helps growth, especially where the emulation is among proximate communities who see one another oftener than nations divided from one another by great distances.

I have cited Germany and Italy, whose cultural achievements were contemporaneous with great and deplorable political disunity. I might ask Indian historians to see when and under what conditions Indian literature, scholarship and philosophy, our arts, music, dancing, architecture, painting and sculpture, and all else falling within what we call culture, flourished. They flourished when India was divided into numerous politically independent or semi-independent States and when we did not know what was political unity. Have they improved under British unity or under our recently consummated Swaraj unity? Even after Swaraj, as long as the Indian States under the various Rajahs and Chieftains were allowed to function, cultural arts throve in competition. No particular advance in these fields has been achieved after the total integration of the States was achieved at the end of the first half of this century.

Even in the matter of education, especially in the early stages, I am very doubtful if we are wise in laying down hard rules and in insisting on uniformity, instead of encouraging a variety of methods and systems and promoting

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competition, leaving the initiative in the hands of autonomous managements. In every line of human activity, individual enterprise and competition fostered by a tolerance of dissimilarities is the real way to progressive peaceful evolution. We should let nature work the synthesis, not force it by artificial pressure. Natural synthesis is inevitable. The domination of one pattern of culture over another as a result of political shifts of power is also inevitable. But if the question is what is good for cultures I vote for variety and competition and not for steam-rolling into uniformity. A hundred flowers may bloom, and all of them are separately beautiful; and the garden in which they bloom is also as a whole beautiful; separately and together they are sources of ineffable joy. Mao said this and he was right there. We should not, under the pressure of political vanities and ambitions, destroy variety.

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Religion and philosophy

There are five essays in this group. Rajaji deals in these essays with characteristic clarity and depth with some of the fundamentals of religion, the impact of modern science on religion, the nature and content of dharma and the validity of religious faith in a world staggering under the impact of science.

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Religion for modern times

MANY earnest men from foreign lands have studied Hindu religious philosophy and some of them have shown a measure of understanding that is truly surprising when one remembers the great difference in religion and tradition between these scholars and their subject of study. In spite of their talent this difference in milieu is a real and great handicap in the way of just appreciation. As for our own savants, the trouble has always been that one is apt to fail to see the wood for the trees. The chief aim of my present exposition will be to bring the civic aspect of Hindu philosophy into prominence. I claim that the philosophy of Hinduism is particularly suited to create and shape a conscience for the effective performance of those civic obligations without which there can be no progress in modern times.

Secondly, I claim that no religious philosophy is so consistent with modern scientific knowledge as that which forms the common fundamental of the worship of the Almighty in India, and this is important as there can be no normality or psychological well-being with inconsistencies prevailing between religious practice and accepted knowledge. Last but not least, I wish to emphasise that the catholicity that lies at the root of Hindu philosophy makes it specially suitable for creating conditions in the present-day world for ordered advance in the way of general happiness.

If it is thought that the history of civilisation in India has failed to prove my proposition in respect of Hindu philosophy and civic conscience, I may submit that the fault lies in the latter-day decline of devotion to that philosophy and not in the philosophy itself. The falling off in

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recent centuries in living devotion to the philosophy to which people have continued to give external allegiance was certainly due to political conditions which interrupted the natural link between creed and life. We have an opportunity now to test the validity of all the civic claims I have made for the Vedanta philosophy; for now we have conditions and opportunities conducive to shape daily life on the basis of religious conviction.

It is my firm belief that Vedanta as conceived and developed in ancient India is a faith particularly suitable for modern times. Indeed, it is my conviction that it is more consistent with the discipline and knowledge that have come to stay in the world through science than most other religious philosophies and beliefs, and for that reason it is more suitable for whole-hearted adoption and practice today than ever before.

Other religions are more or less based on fear—that is on the punishment that may be inflicted by a supreme authority. Some phases of Hindu religion that have survived Vedanta may seem to suffer from this common frailty of dependence on what may be called the postulate of monarchic rule. But it may be generally and truly stated that Hindu philosophy rests more on the rule of law than on the authority of a ruler—on law as understood by natural philosophy, not authoritarian law enunciated by law-making bodies for execution by courts.

We read in Chapter IX of the Bhagavad Gita, verses 4-10, that all beings abide in God but He stands apart from them. He is the origin and the support of beings; yet, He stands apart from them. He uses Nature and creates again and again all this multitude of beings, keeping them completely dependent on Nature. It is a part of His scheme of sovereignty that Nature brings forth the moving and unmoving and in consequence of it, the world evolves. A study of the Upanishads will show that the universe is recognised therein as the result of a gradual unfolding of the creative power inherent in the primordial substance. It is

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a remarkable achievement of intellect and imagination—it would not be incorrect to call it inspiration—that the rule of law as known in science was anticipated in the Hindu scriptures.

It would not be wrong even to claim that the philosophy of Hinduism anticipated the basic theories of biology and physics. The very approach to things that one can read in the Upanishads is a scientific approach. There is constant insistence on adherence to truth and investigation. Hindu faith does not rest on the unusual or the miraculous but is linked to unchangeable law. Religions, running counter to the discipline of physical science and demanding compartmental loyalty, can only lead to hypocrisy. My claim is that Hindu philosophy steers clear of this.

Just as Vedanta anticipated the basic ideas of science in respect of evolution and prepared the ground for harmonising religion with science, so also the Hindu seers saw long ago that the profit motive, the civic right of unrestricted competition, was inconsistent with human progress. The Hindu scripture lays down in clear and emphatic terms the doctrine of work for the sake of society according to capacity and not for profit. The Gita lays stress also on what is a necessary corollary of this, the equal dignity of every form of labour. It furnishes the motive power for the altruistic performance of work by elevating it to the level of religious worship and piety. This is what is known by the oft-repeated, but I fear inadequately understood, term *Karma Yoga*. It is not for profit but as an offering to God that one is asked to work. If a man is devoted to his particular duties and performs them, he wins Beatitude.

When a man performs his proper duty, he worships Him from whom the world issued and by whom all that we see is pervaded. It is better for one to do imperfectly the duties that fall to his lot than to do those of others perfectly. One should not abandon one's natural duty even if evils seem to adhere thereto. Every human activity involves some evil as fire carries smoke. He who works with mind

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detached and free from selfish longings is the real sanyasi. In these terms the Gita explains true renunciation.

The Gita thus supplies the spiritual foundation necessary for the new economy that is everywhere sought to be installed in the modern world in place of what has been found completely inadequate, namely, the motive of private profit. Yet these very texts, which I have just now condensed and rendered into English, have lent themselves in the hands of ignorant critics to the interpretation that the verses are an apology for the selfish preservation of privileges. Perversity and prejudice can convert elixir into poison.

In modern conditions, wherein costlier standards of living have come to stay and increased population has created very difficult problems, the common weal must have the dominant claim over the activities of every individual and people must govern themselves and live under a regulated economy. This regulation causes widespread and deeply felt pain. It hurts because it goes against the instinctive desire of the individual to be free. Therefore, regulation should be so designed as not to completely stifle individual liberty and initiative and the joy that flows therefrom. The pain of a regulated economy is due to the fact that the regulation comes from outside, imposed by an external authority. Properly designed and placed on a spiritual basis, a regulated economy need not be inconsistent with individual satisfaction and individual zeal. The restraints and habits of mind that are required to be developed for altruistic action must flow from faith and inner conviction.

Community-effort is but the sum total of individual effort and it cannot be brought into being unless individuals work with zeal, deriving joy therefrom. Joy can only be in the individual because a corporation as such has no feelings. We should therefore find and furnish a compelling motive to the individual, a motive not of fear but of joy. I claim that religion is a necessary and appropriate force for effective and just regulation. It is only a spiritual

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faith and force that can make men work and enable them to find pleasure in working for the common weal. And this is the very doctrine of life that forms the kernel of Hindu religious thought and was preached so long ago in the Gita.

There is hardly any one who now believes that the old scheme of life, which gave prosperity to Europe in the nineteenth century, has now any validity. Individual competition has to give place to regulated co-operative economy in varying degrees of pace in the several departments of life. This new economy, not based on self-interest but on something else almost the opposite of it, calls for a spiritual and cultural basis contra-distinguished from a material selfish basis. Communism may talk of a materialist dialectic and claim success. But it is forgotten that revolution and misfortune and widespread trouble produce a state of mind which temporarily functions like spiritual faith. Where a new order of non-competitive economy has in any measure succeeded, it is due to the fact that what is equivalent to a spiritual upheaval resulted from widespread revolution or war which enabled the ruling out of the motive of selfishness. This was a good enough temporary substitute for religion. But it cannot last for all time.

The prosperity that undoubtedly resulted in Europe from the economy of private enterprise and competition necessarily carried with it inequality of distribution. The very power of that economy was derived from difference as power is derived from a fall of water. Some people had to live in squalor, may be in the same country or may be elsewhere—the latter was easier wherever it was possible—in order that prosperity might be built up at a visible point. But now squalor is considered disgraceful, whether it be among certain sections of people in the same country or elsewhere, and it is considered criminal to be found building up one's wealth on other people's poverty. It is now the accepted doctrine of economic conduct that wealth should be produced without producing unhappiness anywhere.

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Inequality or unhappiness is no longer considered as inevitable or tolerable. Economic competition, obvious or concealed, is now considered to be only another edition of the law of the jungle.

It is not considered decent to let the devil to take the hind-most. It is no longer considered right to look upon individual effort and individual life as a private and sacred enclosure into which no trespass is to be allowed. In the interest of society as a whole these trespasses into private affairs are now deemed not only permissible but obligatory.

Unfortunately, however, those who happened by the accidents of history to lead movements for the demolition of old economic ideas and for the establishment of the all-prevailing dominance of the public weal and for the reorganisation of society on a non-competitive economy, were tempted by an immediate strategic advantage. They saw that discontent must be produced in order to help a violent revolution and religion fostered contentment. They worked therefore for the demolition of religion, treating it as an opiate and as a part of the old economy. The protagonists of equality thus demolished or sought to demolish—let us hope unsuccessfully—the spiritual basis for human conduct, the very thing required to make conduct unselfish and directed towards the public weal rather than to one's own individual advantage. Religion acted as a consolation and helped men and women to bear misfortunes; it helped men in particular to tolerate inequality; and since inequalities must go, they said we must remove everything that helps men to bear with it. They therefore concluded that religion must go, if not by force then by other subtle pressures.

Thus, what could support the new economy of unselfishness, indeed what alone could support and furnish power to the new idea of unselfish production of wealth, it was decided to destroy. This was suicidal and an unnecessary addition to the programme of economic revolution, and though for the moment its adverse effect was concealed by

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the prevailing spiritual power of a revolutionary upheaval, the substitute could not last for all time. It was not the intention, nor was it possible for men and women to live for ever in a state of war and on the emotional ecstasy of antagonism. So, the new economy of production of wealth had in course of time to be supported by all sorts of make-shift compromises to give some sense of personal advantage.

What obviously supported the old economy of work viz., the profit-motive, came to be re-permitted in concealed ways. The law of selfishness cannot altogether be replaced by force nor can unselfishness be maintained by the mere vigilance of the State. The supervising power has a tendency to deteriorate and get less and less powerful, and compromises by way of concealed personal advantage have to be provided in place of the old frank acceptance of the rule of personal profit. But these make-shifts cannot serve the purpose so well immediately, or be self-sustaining for long-term purposes.

The truth is that society, though the concept is grammatically singular in number, is physically and psychologically plural in reality. It is not one living organism. It is made up of many individuals, who can never get rid of individuality and what flows from it. We may develop altruism by several means, but we can never wholly do away with the individual. If this is accepted as correct, how then shall we keep the individual fully alive in spirit and in action and yet make individual activity truly subservient to the general interest? The claim I put forward is that the Gita code of conduct, which is organically connected with the philosophy of the Upanishads, gives the answer. The secret lies in the substitution of the compulsion and vigilance of the State by a religion that develops an inner law more vigilant than the eye of spies and more effective than the arm of external law.

Now I come to a feature of Hinduism that is unique among all the religions of the world, ancient and modern. viz., its specific and positive doctrine of catholicity. The

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Hindu tradition prescribes that it is not open to any Hindu, whatever the name and mental image of the Supreme Being he may use for his own devotional exercises, to deny the Gods that others worship. He can praise the name and raise the image of his choice to the highest, but he cannot deny the divinity or the truth of the God of other denominations. This unshaken tradition of Hinduism makes it possible for pious fervour to operate on conscience and spirit without disturbing the peace of community life in a composite world. It makes Hindu religious thought as modern in suitability as it is ancient in conception and development. This unique and all important aspect of Hinduism is emphasized in several important and oft-quoted verses in Chapters IV, VII and IX of the Gita. Forms of worship may differ, but all lead to God.

In whatsoever way men approach God, the Gita emphatically lays down that God blesses them. Whatever the path that men may take in worship, it assures us they reach God. The Gita teaching of course referred to the unit of goal of all forms of worship that were prevalent at the time. But the doctrine is stated in such wide terms and so broadbased on essential principle as to be applicable to every variety of religion.

When one contemplates how the Hindu seers so clearly and so long ago saw the truth that justifies this catholicity, one cannot but be lost in wonderment and reverent admiration. This, what I may call the brightest jewel in our inheritance, is a teaching of the highest value for peace and progress and for the world's happiness and spiritual advancement.

All this may be accepted, but the sceptic may ask, "What about renunciation? What about *karma*? How can Hinduism, which preaches *sanyas* and fatalism, be suitable for an age wherein hard work and the due performance of civic duties are so essential?" I shall seek to deal with these queries. First, let me state definitely that it is not the teaching of Vedanta that men should renounce activities

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and become anchorites. Vedanta demands renunciation, but the renunciation is different from what is referred to in the argument against the suitability of Hinduism for the modern citizen. It is renunciation of false values, renunciation of attachment that the Vedanta wants in its votaries.

What is preached in the Vedanta is enlightened and true evaluation of essentials and spirit of detachment. And this is explained and reiterated in the Gita quite as if this very query raised now had specifically been put to Sri Krishna. *Buddhi* and *asangha* are insisted on, not *sanyas*. Indeed, the performance of tasks with detachment is the lesson that is dinned into the reader in every chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. It is not necessary to quote passages. There is no room whatsoever for doubt on this head. The Upanishads and the Gita want men to get rid of the impediment to true social co-operation, viz., the desire for pleasure and pleasurable sensations. It is this desire that leads to error, anger, confusion of mind and pain and grief.

The ideal citizen should perform his tasks and duties with detachment. His activities should be in general interest, not for selfish gain. This is the great teaching of the Gita that has justly made it as famous in modern times as it is classic in the Vedantic tradition. Out of the Upanishad teaching and its doctrine of the ultimate reality, the modern citizen can derive a fearlessness of spirit which, added to the detachment and rigorous execution of duties preached by the Gita, could make of every citizen a veritable giant in the service of society.

The resolution and fearlessness that characterised Mahatma Gandhi's long, strenuous and dedicated life were inspired by this philosophy and this religion. The single illustration from recent history is perhaps more convincing than hours of argument.

Coming to *karma*, the doctrine that makes Hinduism what it is, is nothing but the great law of cause and effect in things spiritual. You cannot, in the material or the

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psychological world, get rid of the effects of what you do. And as the body is not the whole of the matter but there is an immortal Spirit dwelling in and making the human being what he is, death does not end the chain of sequence. The working agent, the Spirit in the body, does not and cannot die with the body. He shapes himself moment by moment by his activities, mental or physical. At death, he does not disappear into nothing but enters a new tenement which he has built for himself by his life-activities. This is Hinduism. You may accept it or reject it and search for other theories. But if accepted, the Hindu theory of *karma* gives the highest sense of responsibility to the citizen.

No explanation or theory in regard to the ultimate nature and cause of things can be made proof against all logical difficulties. Our knowledge is necessarily finite and we cannot discover and resolve the mysteries of infinity. On the assumption of the soul as the basis of personality, it can be claimed that no theory can be formulated more in harmony with known laws of nature than the Hindu doctrine of *karma*. It is the application in the moral sphere of the law of conservation of energy as established by the physicists. Indeed, both the physicists' law and the doctrines of *karma* may be looked upon as parts of the same universal law.

It is wrong to think of *karma* in terms of what may be facetiously called its western half-brother, fatalism. Destiny, as taught in Vedanta, does not involve an unscientific attitude towards natural laws or a loss of faith in human effort which is fatalism. *Karma* is just the unalterable law of effect following cause. Newton put it in clear terms with respect to physical momentum. The Vedanta puts it down for the motions of the soul. Is it possible to do a thing and escape its consequences? One cannot expect a particular result to happen for which something else appropriate to produce that result could have been done. Given a certain thought or act, the natural result cannot be escaped.

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This is *karma*. Is it not well for citizens to see this truth, to accept it as binding doctrine and perform their tasks and duties and avoid the prohibitions, not in fear of the magistrate, but remembering this inescapable law?

The law of *karma* does not do away with free will and the value of initiative or endeavour. On the contrary, it is the truest charter of freedom and initiative. The thoughts you entertain, the words you choose to speak, the acts you do, the restraints you exercise on yourself, all these produce their full fruit; no effort goes for nought. If no one can be robbed of the fruits of his labour, is it not true freedom?

There cannot be any better freedom in the world for man than that his future is entirely in his hands. The very meaning of the word "karma" is work. It is the law of work that is laid down in Vedanta, not a doctrine of negation of human effort. *Vidhi* is law, not blind fate.

Need I say anything more to demonstrate that the doctrine of *karma* is as far from fatalism as poles are asunder. Man evolves himself according to his thoughts and actions and even death does not terminate the opportunity for remedy and progress. This is Hinduism. Pious Christians and Vaishnavites may here feel a doubt. If *karma* is inescapable and sin must go through what it has unfortunately earned, is there no room then for grace in Hinduism? Yes, there is. Grace comes through penitence and penitence is human effort and victorious effort. Grace is not the caprice of the Lord. When penitence has truly been achieved by the soul, it so completely changes the heart of the penitent that he attributes it to the caprice of the Lord. But that is only one of the beauties of the joy of penitence. It does not alter the law of *karma*.

Penitence is an act that has its full reward like any other act. Penitence is the victory of the soul in its battle against evil and the conquering soul feels the victory contemporaneously with the battle itself. It is a rapturous combination of the pain of battle and the joy of victory. Sin is worked out in *karma* through true sorrow and suffering undergone

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by the sinner. There is no contradiction between the doctrines of grace and of *karma*.

A question may be asked here. Supposing one accepts the doctrine of re-birth, what good is it however to be told that something will be fruitful in a future birth wherein we shall have no memories of the past? How can it foster or further individual initiative or endeavour? Why should I labour or renounce or retrench my present joy for one who will come to exist in another birth with whom you identify me but which identity is not felt by me now or will be felt then? Thus may the pleasure-seeker pose his difficulty. The answer is this.

Friend, do you not derive a joy in doing the right thing apart from its effects or your own advantage? The joy of right conduct is inherent in human nature. All recorded and unrecorded experience confirms this for every one, big and small. Members of a family or of a village intuitively work for one another and derive pleasure therefrom. Though they may obtain no personal advantage from it, they are immensely happy when they do it.

People are not indifferent to the good of their village or their country. The joy of right conduct and of mutual helpfulness is as real as the universal force of attraction that the men of science call by the name of gravitation. The Great and Universal One has become many and the many seek to become one again and are attracted to one another. The original unity reasserts itself in the shape of the several forces that attract things and beings to one another. Men sacrifice themselves for the good of the State, for the safety of future citizens and for their happiness in the coming generations. In all this, men and women derive a joy which is instinctive and not argued from hopes or expectations of present or future rewards for such conduct.

We do not know who will enjoy the shade of the trees we plant on the road-side. Still we do plant them. In regulating our conduct for re-birth, we follow a similar process that contributes to peopling the future world with

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good men and women. Posterity is "ourselves" according to Hinduism. Let us do what we can to raise a good race. Let us be good and where we have sinned, let us repent. Let us plant our souls in the good earth and be born again as good men, be it even without memories which, if we had, we could not bear the painful weight thereof.

Let us be re-born, purified and better, than we are. If we all try thus, the world will ultimately be a world full of good men. This is the plan of Vedanta, the eugenics of souls, a scientific plan to bring into existence a better breed of men. Have we not laboured to improve the breed of poultry and cattle? Have we not succeeded wonderfully therein? Let us improve the breed of men, bodies as well as souls. The hens do not remember their previous state. What does it matter? The cows do not recognise the progress that animal husbandry has brought to the race of cows. What does it matter if we shall not be able to remember who we were? Indeed, it is better we do not remember.

The object of right living is to a Vedantin two-fold—one's own true happiness is attained thereby and one also contributes to a better world through re-birth. From simple rural co-operation to patriotism and from patriotism to Vedanta, it is an integrated whole in widening circles. Co-operation improves the village. Patriotism produces a better countrywide state of things. Vedanta will bring into being a better world.

Summarising what I have attempted to explain, religions that contradict the conclusions of science cannot but degenerate into formalism and hypocrisy and Hindu philosophy can claim to be peculiarly in harmony with the latest knowledge. Secondly, if human happiness and progress depend on doing away with selfishness and have to be based on a new economy of social co-operation, Hindu philosophy furnishes a faith and a culture which are peculiarly fitted for such reorganisation and which can support and strengthen the compulsory laws of a democratic State. Thirdly, Hindu philosophy has raised catholicity

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and tolerance to the level of positive and cardinal religious duty. Hindu philosophy has thus potentialities to make the greatest positive contribution to civilisation. It has no quarrel whatsoever with the physicist or the geologist, and yet it offers a firm spiritual foundation for a new co-operative and catholic polity for the governance of the world. It is not an opiate but can be a powerful driving force and automatic regulator.

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Indian philosophy and the modern world

SCHOLARS and educated men throughout the world have come to realize that religions and philosophies say the same things all the world over, and that there is little to be marked out as distinct and different. All philosophies and all religions tell their followers to be good, and enforce that advice by adding that to be good is the highest wisdom as well as duty. There is no difference as to what it is to be good. Prophets and teachers have no differences among them on this. Abstruse analysis only seems to confuse what is quite clear to the conscience of men and women. There are some differences in laying stress due to the conditions of the place and the time, but allowing for this the fundamental unity of all philosophies and religions is more than clearly established.

Indian philosophy is based on the acceptance of the Deity. It, therefore, makes large room for grace, and for 'surrender', the essential preliminary to grace. Man has little hope without dependence on divine grace. In Indian philosophy, as in other systems of religious thought, it is accepted that divine grace is the ultimate consolation of man. The main stress in Indian philosophy is, however, on the doctrine of *karma*, the inescapable law of cause and effect in things spiritual as in the material world. Every act has its effect on oneself, whether the act be thought, word, or deed. *Karma* is not fatalism. It is law. The doctrine of *karma* does not underestimate human effort. It puts, indeed, the highest value on it by ensuring the proper result for every act. Every act, good or bad, has at once an effect on oneself apart from its effect on others.

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This is the Indian doctrine of *karma*, for which the religious philosophy of Hinduism is justly famous. It is well that the modern world should realize the impossibility of man's escape from the result of his own actions. The warning that the law of *karma* gives to us, to beware at every step, will serve the world as no other teaching can in this age of science.

There is another great, perhaps in a way even greater, service that Hindu philosophy has done and is doing to the modern world. It is in its doctrine of positive tolerance. 'Tolerance' is not an adequate word, even with the addition of the adjective 'positive', fully to express this most important tenet of Indian thought—that there are several ways to reach God, and that several forms of worship are equally acceptable to the Supreme Being. Indian philosophy lays the greatest stress on an attitude not merely of passive tolerance but active respect for different forms of worship. It is the exact opposite of the doctrine of exclusive truth on which Christianity and Islam sincerely and seriously insist. The earliest sacred teachings in Hinduism laid emphasis on the doctrine of positive respect for differing forms of worship and its corollary of positive companionship with different types of worshippers. It may appear strange, but it is a fact that Indian philosophy seeks to look upon even the unbeliever's denial as a form of worship, for to be constantly concerned with God's presence is the obverse of the very denial in which the atheist indulges, provided his conduct and life do not offend the eternal laws of right behaviour.

A third element in Indian ethics that deserves mention for appreciation in the modern world is the doctrine of trusteeship, as it has been called, since Gandhiji gave that name to it. Whatever you hold as your own, look upon it as given by God to you and look upon yourself as entrusted with it only for good uses. This is the reconciliation between the charter of individual property and the claim of society. The claim of society to the benefit of all that

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its members hold cannot be denied. But the pull to do away with 'property', and the rights appertaining to it, will kill the incentive to produce and safeguard it against waste. So it is that Gandhiji pointed out what he called the doctrine of trusteeship as the answer to, not a justification for, modern socialism. He preferred the ancient socialism of Hindu doctrine to the modern compulsory form of expropriation, because he believed it would keep the goose alive while taking the eggs.

The fourth element in Indian religious philosophy that I would point out may look like a defence of polytheism and of savage forms of worship. It is the safeguard that Hinduism offers against anthropomorphism in religion. The polytheism, that is, the worship of the single Supreme Being in many forms, and the number and diversity and strangeness of the forms to be approached with reverence in the spirit of worship—these serve to provide against anthropomorphism better than the concentration on a single form, more or less indistinctly conceived in the devotee's mind as the exclusive object of worship and the only real Supreme Being. Nothing can be a more scientific approach in the quest to grasp partially what is beyond human grasp. The polymorphism of God in Hindu philosophy is not a historic synthesis of varying beliefs but service in the direction of correct thought in this field.

Another point worthy of mention in this brief survey is the elevation of disinterested work to the rank of worship in the Hindu scriptures. The way of life taught in the *Bhagavad Gita* is based expressly on the equal dignity and sacredness of every form of labour that falls to one's lot. All work, it reiterates with solemn emphasis, should be done honestly and disinterestedly for *loka sangraha*—welfare of the community—and not for the satisfaction of personal desires. The performance of one's allotted task in this spirit is specifically described in the *Gita* as an authorized and accepted form of worship in place of every ritual. Indeed, the *Gita* lays down in a unique manner the whole

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socialist doctrine by characterizing work as a religious offering in the truest sense.

These elements I have touched upon may serve to point out the place of Indian philosophy in the modern world, which, with all its advance in the field of physical science, has also come to realize the vastness of the unknown and the consequent place of religion in life.

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Science, philosophy and religion

THE way to obtain a vision of the Divine Presence is not by discussion, by learning or through the intellect, but only through Bhakti, that is by appealing to God Himself through prayer. The *Katha* Upanishad says:

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।

Let us not confound scholarship in the *Gita* or other scriptures with piety or religion. One can be a very good Sanskrit scholar, can study and be an adept in all great Sri Sankaracharya's writings, but still be far from religion or the pious life. We can teach a monkey to play a number of tricks skilfully and well. But though dressed in pants and coat and turban or hat and though doing things just like a gentleman, perhaps sometimes even better than a gentleman, the monkey is still a monkey. There is no real and full integration between the thing done, the external, and the mind that brings it about. The monkey does it all not because it knows it is good, but because it is compelled to do it and has learnt it. One's external equipment and learning may be all just that of a religious man, but the question is whether your mind is devoted to God apart from learning.

If in the mind there is no piety and no love of God, any amount of Sanskrit scholarship just amounts to the clever tricks of a monkey, and is not true religion. Do you wish to be pious or do you wish to be only a good scholar? The former makes for the grace of God, makes you good. The latter makes only for pedantry to feed ambition or to satisfy some other lower instinct. That is why the rishi said:

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truly yearns for the vision of God and you obtain His grace." We have many scholars and philosophers. But what we want is that we should be good and pious men.

We have many problems facing us in our new life as a nation. There is great need for reviving moral and spiritual values and developing afresh internal sanctions for good conduct as distinguished from external regulations. "We should seek a renewal of the spiritual life as a solution to many of the problems which plague us today," said Mr. Truman when he was President of the United States.

In industry and commerce, and in other lines of public service, we require truly religious men. Let us not read the scriptures for display of learning, but turn our minds to God. Wherever we are, whatever we are doing, we are in the presence of God who is Father and Mother to us all. Let us give that Great Father-Mother our love.

Let us do nothing that our Mother will be sad or ashamed about.

Whatever work we may be doing, let us remember God all along. This is the lesson of the *Gita*.

Practising the presence of God is Yoga. Brother Lawrence, a cook in a Carmelite monastery, was the first to use this phrase of the "practice of the presence of God." He wrote no book. Exalted personages came from afar to the monastery with the single purpose of having a talk with that cook! They have left some notes of conversation from which it appears that Brother Lawrence had in his experience found that the best method of worship and prayer was that of doing the common business of the day without any view of pleasing men, but in the knowledge of God's companionship in every task however mean or common. He said that it was a great delusion to think that the time for prayer ought to be separately set aside. The time devoted to the work of the day was also the time for prayer and remembrance of God. This is indeed what the *Gita* teaches as the way of doing all work and making it an act of worship as well as work. Let every task be done

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in company with Him. What better fellow-worker can we have than the loving Being who is ever with us if only we desire that company? "O, my poor heart," sang the Aalwaar, "do not be downcast, the Best Friend is always by you. Those that want Him have him at call. He that lies on the Cosmic Ocean, He who is worshipped in the temple on the Venkata Hills, He dwells indeed in the heart of man."

One may ask: "What you say is all right. But is there God? May we pray thus—O God, if there be a God, save my soul, if I have a soul?"

Take a tamarind seed or the tiny seeds of a *papaya* fruit or the still tinier seed of an *amrod* fruit. In that insignificant looking little thing is encased something mysterious. Put the seed in the moist earth. It sprouts and grows and becomes the big *amrod* or tamarind or other tree with all its spreading branches, leaves, flowers and fruits with the flavour and all the qualities of shape, colour and substance appertaining to it. All this is packed into the tiny seed with absolutely insured perfection.

Take the egg of a hen. Break it and see what there is in it—a sticky fluid with a little yellow part. You see nothing particular in it. Yet the egg, kept warm for a few days under proper conditions provided by the mother-bird brooding over it or in an artificial incubator, out emerges a living, moving thing which grows with wings and feathers, the colour, manners and voice of the bird to which it belongs. How does all this happen as if to order? Take the microscope and examine the fluid in the egg. You will see nothing of the peacock or the parrot in it. Yet it knows exactly what to become and it becomes that.

All this is wonderful. And if we knew what is in a mother's womb where the human egg is laid and protected from harm, we could see that a tiny bit of living matter, no bigger than a pin-head is that out of which this wonderful being, man, comes to be, with all his organs and his most marvellous memory and knowing mind. All this most

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wonderful potentiality was carefully packed and encased in that little human egg which was only as small as a full-stop in a printed page.

If in school and college we learnt not only to read and to compute but were also trained how to think and marvel at all this that goes on without fuss or jolt, quietly, sweetly, harmoniously as a song is sung, then we prepare ourselves for true religion and ordered reverential life. Science is not the enemy of religion but a preparation for it.

Science "explains" all these wonders, that is, puts things in proper order of cause and sequence up to a point. When we proceed to examine the fundamentals of things and go deep down in that examination, we go beyond science into the region of metaphysics. The border line between science and religion is what we call metaphysics. Metaphysics is mainly negative. It furnishes the reason—why—for religion.

The great advance of science fills up the territory of science with more and more known points, but this does not take us across the border. If we take up any book of physics, we find the preliminary chapters giving some definitions which students commit to memory. The words used are simple, but it is not easy to understand the full meaning of those definitions. This is because these deal with things on the border line. What is "cause" and what is "effect"? What is a "law" in science? These seem to be pretty simple, but really are not so easy to grasp as they appear. Physical phenomena follow certain sequences. These sequences are set out by men of science as a result of numerous observations, observations being planned for the purpose. Planned observations are called experiments.

Supposing you observe a number of cricket matches. Suppose you have no book setting out the rules of the game and you know nothing about how it all goes on. You simply observe what takes place in a series of cricket matches. You see the players coming in and going out when something happens. You see the figures on the score-board changing from time to time. You see at the end of

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the game congratulations and excitement. If you observed numerous matches and noted all the events accurately in the order in which they took place, you could find out the rules of the game even though you did not have anyone to tell you the rules. When you discover the rules by such a process, you are a scientist.

Nature's game is played in a particular way and according to rules which are not published first. No one knows how it all came about. No club organised it. Scientists observe hundreds and thousands of events and make out a fairly accurate list of sequences or "laws" as a result of analysis of their observations. This is what we call discovery of the laws of nature.

Imagine someone suddenly brought into the world of cricket without any information given to him of how the game is organized by clubs and associations. He would think that when a ball hits the wicket, a player goes back to the pavilion. One is called the cause and the other the effect. Again, if a ball is caught by someone the player goes to the pavilion. This is also another cause-and-effect phenomenon. You can imagine a savage thinking in this way until he feels he knows all about the game.

Pass on from cricket to the world of nature. Men of science have seen and recorded causes and effects. After laborious observation and experiment and careful analysis, they have put down many rules according to which these events take place. The catalogue of sequences or causes and effects, that is, the series of laws of nature discovered by men of science, closely resembles a very intelligent guess of the rules of the game of cricket made by observation of a number of matches. The sequences observed by scientists are simplified and yet more simplified. The greater the simplification of the code of science, the greater the joy and satisfaction of the scientist. But all the same they are just classified observations, says the metaphysician. They do not *explain*. The Organizer and Conductor of the game of nature is not available for questioning. Hence we get to

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fancy that the game goes on by itself and we deny His very existence.

Let us now read a few slokas from Chapter IX of the *Bhagavad Gita*:

मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थित ॥

All this world is pervaded by Me in form unmanifest; all beings abide in Me, but I stand apart from them. (IX-4)

न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥

And yet beings are not rooted in Me; Behold the scheme of My sovereignty; Myself, the origin and the support of beings, yet standing apart from them. (IX-5)

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥

Using Nature which is Mine own, I create, again and again, all this multitude of beings dependent on and bound by Nature. (IX-8)

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥

Under My over-seeing eye, Nature brings forth the moving and the unmoving and keeps the world rolling on. (IX-10)

The Supreme Power has arranged things so that they go on by themselves. He need not intervene. He has transferred all power to the things themselves. It is a grand and perfect scheme of decentralization. He is ever working and yet He is not seen to be working. The machinery works by itself once it is started. We that observe and are curious, sceptical or credulous, we too are all parts of this

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great machine. We cannot get out of it and look through the windows into the Engineer's residence or workshop. This is the predicament of man who is himself the most wonderful part of the universe. It is not surprising, therefore that some men say the machine is all automatic and there is nothing else, that there is no Engineer. The very smoothness and efficiency of the working of the machine leads to this notion.

The *Chaandogya* Upanishad is a very old scripture and one that may be classed among the greatest books of the ancient world:

सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयं
तद्धैक आहुरसदेवेदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयं
तस्मादसतः सज्जायत ॥

Dear boy! The Real existed in the beginning alone and by itself. Then the world came out of It. About this others say: No, in the beginning there was a void and nothing else; from that void was produced the world. (*Chaandogya*, *Adhyaaya* VI, *Khaanda* 2, *Mantra* 1).

कुतस्तु खलु सोम्यैवꣳ स्यादिति होवाच कथमसतः
सज्जायेतेति सत्त्वेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् ॥

But child, that could not be, said the rishi.
How from nothing could come something? It is not possible. Therefore, in the beginning was God all by Himself, out of Whom came all else. (*Mantra* 2).

"Nothing can come out of nothing," says the rishi to his pupil. "Look round and see this vast universe. See specially man and his mind. Can all this simply come out of nothing and run on by itself? How could anything come out of nothing? All these must have issued out of something that transcends the qualities of what we see."

The thinkers of our land conceived from very early times what may be called the process of evolution. They saw by

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intuition that the multiplicity of phenomenon in the universe could result out of evolution from simple origins. But they also saw that the process of evolution by itself could not do away with the need for the basic Power and Primary Origin, however simple it might be. *Sat* cannot come out of *asat*. *Sat* could come only out of *sat*.

The name of Darwin is well-known. He was a saint among scientists. He was not only a great and industrious man of science but a very good man, one who was respected for his integrity and saint-like character as much as for his genius and industry. He and some others of his time worked out a theory of evolution to explain how the numerous forms of life that can be observed in the world came to exist, that is to say, how the various species of life among plants, insects, birds, fish and animals came to be. The theory is that one variety grows out of another variety and thus the innumerable species of life come to exist. This theory eliminated the belief that God created man and all other varieties of life together as set out in the first chapter of the Old Testament of the *Bible*. Naturally all the orthodox Christians in the Western world condemned these speculations as irreligious. In India, however, the teachers of religion and philosophy from time immemorial assumed that God worked through evolution. In India the theory of evolution, as the Indian philosophers conceived it, did not dispute God.

Take for granted that a variety of a certain plant has come to exist. By some accident or unknown reason, the plant puts forth leaves of a slightly different shape from the leaves of its parent. This variation helps to absorb more of sunlight in the circumstances in which the plant grows and thereby this variety flourishes better and multiplies. Hence a new variety of the plant comes to exist. This illustrates the origin and conservation of a new species by survival. Variations occurred in plant and animal life and being fitter for survival in the conditions prevailing, these variations flourished and multiplied. This is how innumerable

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species came to exist in the world and are still being formed. This is the theory going by the name, evolution.

We all know that the characteristics of the parents are transmitted to the offspring, but occasionally a variation is exhibited. If this variation happens to assist its survival in the struggle for nutrition and existence, the variation is made permanent and becomes a basis for a new variety. This is the theory of automatic evolution of species by survival. This theory was so amply demonstrated and so beautifully explained that science swore by it and considered it as a new Bible. I do not say that this is wrong. I only wish to point out that the theory of evolution does not solve the mystery of the universe, but only bypasses it.

How did life start out of dead matter? Lifeless inorganic matter is something different from a living cell that grows and builds itself from its surroundings, multiplies and lives, so to say, immortally. The origin of the living cell somehow is assumed. Out of that we can theorize and build up the rest of the living world by a theory of evolution. Again, although the main plank of the theory of evolution is the principle of heredity, of the transfer of characteristics from parent to offspring, both in plants and animals, the other equally essential basis in the evolutionary theory is the inexplicable occurrence of variations contrary to the hereditary principle. On this occurrence of variations and their fitness for survival rests the origin of species as expounded by Darwin. The occurrence of a variation almost as if nature desired to produce a new species is a mystery unexplained by that theory. Thus the theory of natural selection just bypasses the mystery of life.

We push the unknown into two corners, (1) the occurrence of life out of non-life, (2) the occurrence of variations to give the start to a favourable condition for the evolution of a new species. I have said all this to show that despite the most fascinating advance made by science, the mystery of life still remains a mystery.

As they have split the atom and almost demonstrated that

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it consists only of energy and nothing else, so they may one day succeed in splitting the living cell and discover what goes to make life. Science may then claim that the secret of the evolution of life out of dead matter has been unveiled. But even then, the unknown Power behind what is seen must remain unknown, as unknown as ever before.

"Dear boy, this wonderful world could not be born just out of nothing. *Asat* cannot produce *sat*. *Sat* alone can produce *sat*. Therefore believe." So said the rishi in *Chaandogya* Upanishad. That truth holds even now. We should not be confused by the brilliance of scientific discoveries into thinking that God is negativated thereby. All these great wonders must come out of something more wonderful. And that is God. This simple process of reasoning, as old as man himself and on which is founded all religion, is still valid.

The discoveries of science and our increased knowledge of the material world are no answers to the call of religion. There is behind the world of material phenomena a mystery that calls for awe and reverence and faith as distinguished from inquiry. Man's attitude towards this mystery that hides behind the phenomenal world is what is called religion. As a corollary to that attitude, all religions lay down the way of life for their respective followers and human society has held together as a result of the loyalty of men to the ways of life dictated by various religions.

The Upanishads and the *Gita* contain the way of life which by tradition has been accepted by the people of India.

What does the *Gita* teach us? Every moment, our thoughts and our activities shape our future. As a result of each thought which we entertain and dwell on, and each act we commit, we become pure or impure, good or bad, more and more restrained and capable of self-control, or less and less so and slaves of evil urges. Every moment we shape our character as a goldsmith shapes his jewels on the anvil, each stroke of his hammer corresponding to each thought, word and act of ours. Therefore, it follows that

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by self-control, enlightened thought and action we can free our souls from evil and improve ourselves. The *Gita* tells us how to do it. Yoga is the name given in the *Gita* to efforts at self-improvement.

Yoga is not tricks done with our muscles or our breath or exhibitions of physical skill and practice. Yoga is the effort to purify our character. Yoga is the general name given to those mental operations which we should practise in order to make the mind clean and remain pure without difficulty.

What are these efforts? (1) Do your allotted duties properly and unselfishly. Duties come to you by reason of your fitness, by your place in society or by accident. Do always what is good for others. Hesitate when what you do is for your own good, and consider whether it is good for others around you. (2) Do not be disturbed by success or defeat. Think of God Who guides and orders everything and Who alone knows what is ultimately good. Remember that others are as much children of the Universal Mother as you are. (3) Keep your senses of pleasure under control. Regulate your daily routine so that the purity of your mind is not disturbed. (4) Always remember that the mind is the chief fortress. If you let it go, you lose the battle. Impure or selfish thoughts hand over the mind-fort to the enemy. (5) Periodically meditate on God and surrender yourself to the Father-Mother.

You may often fail in these efforts. But every effort adds strength to your soul. These efforts are to the soul what physical exercise is to the body. You may not see immediate results, but they strengthen the soul.

This is the teaching of the *Gita*. It is not a book for study and examination as a text-book. It is a book that tells men how to regulate their activities and their minds. It is like a railway guide. It is a guide-book for the journey of life. We should travel with its help, not commit it to memory. Merely committing it to memory will not enable us to reach the journey's end.

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Province of religion

> THE *Raamaayana* and the *Mahabharata* were woven into the texture of millions of lives in every generation for thousands of years. I have often wondered what India would be like if we forgot the Buddha, the Upanishads and the great epics. It would be uprooted and would lose the basic characteristics which have clung to it and given it distinction throughout these long ages. India would cease to be India.
>
> If religion deals not with dogmas and ceremonials but rather with the higher things of life, there should be no conflict with science or *inter se* between religions. It might be the high privilege of India to help in bringing about the synthesis. That would be India's ancient tradition inscribed in Ashoka's edicts: 'The increase of spiritual strength is of many forms.'

These words and other connected thoughts expressed by Jawaharlal Nehru in his recent Azad memorial address induced me to collect my thoughts on the subject of faith and science.

The culture that has grown in the great continent of India through the many thousands of years of her civilized history is something not only for pride but of value to the world. All culture according to Indian philosophy resolves itself into self-control in one form or another.

Good citizenship also resolves itself ultimately into self-control. True happiness, too, results from self-control and misery is the consequence of a lack of self-control. This is the Indian philosophy of life, but it is also a universal

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truth. Self-control is the supreme discipline for all intelligent men. This is what, the Upanishads, the *Gita* and the Buddha repeatedly told men, is most important in human life.

Human behaviour has to be controlled. It is more satisfactorily effected and more easily borne when there is no question of the coercion of a majority, or of any privileged minority, inflicting control through the institutions of government, but the required constant control comes from within, in the form of self-discipline as an automatic habit and as a form of worship of the Ruler of the Universe. We get this self-control accepted and practised with the least pain and the maximum satisfaction, not by law but by the force of religion, belief and practice until it crystallizes into personal habit and national culture.

Religion may be defined in this aspect as consisting of the behests of revered dead men. The behests of dead saints are more acceptable, more easily tolerated than the behests of living men, which is what control by law or government amounts to. The command of the majority in a democracy is not less irksome than the decree of a monarch or an oligarchy. But the command of a dead saint which forms the basis of self-discipline, which has no coercion behind it effectively, shapes human behaviour without unpleasantness until the individual feels it is his own will and the privilege of his cultured mind.

The physical law of cause and effect is unchangeable and from this issues the doctrine of determinism in respect of human behaviour also. Some philosophers hold that all human behaviour is pre-determined. The circumstances shape themselves according to the law of cause and effect. These and heredity, and other purely physical causes, bring about human behaviour. Some vague doubts have been cast on the physical law itself by the theories that have emerged about the movements of the fundamental particles of matter; but this does not materially affect the doctrine of determinism. The statistical law of averages is brought into

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the argument for determinism as against these doubts raised by modern science itself.

Whether, on the contrary, man has been endowed with free will to act as he chooses, independent of the behests of the theologian's God, as Milton repeatedly affirms in *Paradise Lost*, and independent of the force of heredity and material circumstances postulated by the biologists and the physicists, is still an unsolved question. The scientists have not totally yielded to the strong determinist bent of their pre-occupation. They still linger over some argument or other to make out free-will for the human mind. The inherent inclination of the human mind is to discover freedom for itself and to indulge at least in an illusion of freedom. The human mind established in its own dignity refuses to surrender to determinism, and loves to claim room to prefer of its own choice what it considers right to what it condemns as wrong. It is repugnant to the human mind, even of the scientist, to hold that God is just a cold mathematician and to allow man to renounce responsibility.

We are inclined to claim freedom when our action results in something pleasant or creditable. We are inclined the other way to be determinists, when it turns out to be something unpleasant or discreditable. Alone among all the things in the Universe, the human mind rebels against the imposition of dead mechanical order. The best theological solution is the Hindu doctrine of *leela*—the play of Isvara. This is a pleasant way of expressing the limitations of human enquiry. Man cannot adjudge or even understand the will of God or His plan, or even of His nature. Anthropomorphic attempts at understanding the Universe, not to speak of God the Author, necessarily end in error and futility.

The physicists are bound to favour determinism. But whatever be the truth, human duty and responsibility cannot be wiped out. They may be deemed to be only relative duties and not truth in the absolute sense. On that basis

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an ethic, some code of control of human behaviour, has a definite place in life. Freedom may be an illusion. But there *is* that illusion, and relative responsibility and duty issue from it.

No ethic can hang on itself. It must hang on a faith, a theory about the Universe. However convincing and irrefutable the determinist position may be within the compass of dynamics, and however exhaustive the physical explanation of the phenomena of the Universe may be, there is still the residual question of the origin of it all. We seek causes at every step in the physical sciences. We refuse to rest until we find them. How can we suddenly stop that urge when we reach the stage beyond which we cannot travel? This residual question is not answered by the discovery of unqualified and unchangeable order in the Universe. It must remain reverently unaswered. It is the basis of the humility called religion.

A formula in respect of the unknowable region that remains and must remain unexplored by science is essential for man, to choose good and reject evil. Even if there be no freedom to choose the good in preference to evil and man is just a plaything of the 'gods', the fact remains that the best men somehow prefer or appear to prefer the unpleasant right to the most attractive wrong, and they feel this in their own hearts as a free preference. Man cannot, he will not, give up religion as long as we all agree that self-control is essential for happiness—one's own true happiness as well as the welfare of others around us.

Therefore, we come to the conclusion that government must support religion. They need not and should not support a particular religion but should support all religions that are not wedded to immorality. The Upanishads saw this and laid it down. The *Gita* did the same. Ashoka did it in his edicts. Governments cannot afford to be 'secular'. Their impartiality and refusal to support particular religions need not have been given this wrong name. 'Secular' does not express the position of positive

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support to all religions alike. It is out of faith that spiritual values flow and faith, if it is broadly identical among a large mass of people, is religion.

In the days of infant science, religions included many branches of material knowledge also. The Veda of the Hindus was an encyclopaedia of knowledge in all departments. Specialization took place gradually and the growing knowledge of the world of matter was finally extricated from religion. This led to religion being gradually freed from the incubus of departments of knowledge subject to development and change, and from the consequential contradictions, that for a long time discredited and puzzled piety. Today these sources of contradictions must be wholly removed from the field of religion. It is not good for religion to have its own astronomy or physics or medicine, while the sciences of astronomy, physics and medicine are making rapid strides forward giving up old theories and adopting new ones. Religion must confine itself to its own proper field thereby giving no room for contradictions with science. Science would then not come into conflict with religion which belongs to a region outside science altogether.

The use to which science is to be put is not a matter of science but a question of right conduct which must fall within the bounds of ethics and therefore of religion. The nature of bacteriological or nuclear poison is a matter of science. But the use of it in war would be an ethical or religious question. All the means and strategies employed in war are science but the limits to which means and strategies could go, and the manner in which wars may be conducted, are matters of conduct falling within the field of morality and religion. The oft-mentioned conflicts between religion and politics, religion and science are all products of confusion in this respect, pure fallacies. There can be in the matter of conduct no two standards, one to be actually followed in politics or commerce and another to be regarded as religious ideals without being followed in worldly

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transactions. All conduct must accept and follow the restraints enjoined in religion, be it the *Gita* or the *Bible* or any other scripture. The ethical restraints of human conduct cannot be treated as something different from worldly affairs, to be kept apart from human conduct itself.

It is futile to imagine that the affairs of a people do not fall within the jurisdiction of the codes of religion regarding human conduct. Nations are individuals living together and combining their individual efforts. Their rights and duties are not of a class different from the rights and duties of individuals. It would be merely a trick of evasion to make such a distinction. The human conduct such as is sought to be controlled by the codes of various religions is not merely the personal conduct of some (a small or large number of) individuals but the conduct of *every* individual and therefore of them all combined. The whole cannot escape from the restraints placed on the component parts. Nations cannot, therefore, claim to be free from the ethical principles that are good for the component individuals. India has a mission in this respect. May the guidance she gets be in furtherance of this mission.

Recently the Church Peace Union of America distributed in India a book by Ernest Lefever in a cheap edition. The book seeks to prove that ethics should have nothing to do with foreign policy. We are told therein that 'Judaeo-Christian' ethics attributes sin to man, that this original sin attaches to politics, and specially to foreign policy, and that therefore we should not complain if foreign policy deviates from morality or from the teachings of Jesus. One wonders what Christ or Paul would have said to this. It would seem that the Church Peace Union lends its authority to the frustration of the object of the Son-of-God's incarnation on earth on the basis of a doctrine of the inevitability of sin.

This leads us to the capital question of how we shall conquer ill-will and suspicion, and establish peace. Blessed are the peace-makers. And how shall we make peace?

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There is no way but by example and unilateral action, and the acceptance of all the hazards contained in such unilateral action. Some things are hard to dissolve in any fluid, except in a particular liquid. Hatred and suspicion can be dissolved only in the uncalculating unilateral steps taken by the more courageous party. Courage consists not in the organization of self-defence and retaliation but in the un-negotiated step taken in disregard of fear and suspicion.

When both parties are in a dangerously strong position, distrust and fear continue through any negotiation that might be attempted and render it impossible of successful conclusion. If the hazards of unilateral action are ruled out, all approaches to peace are closed and only balanced terror can prevail as the alternative to hot conflict and disaster. Unilateral action is a policy essentially rooted in religion; and when this is not available, peace such as we want is automatically ruled out. The principle of unilateral action has a place even in negotiation at every step therein, if the latter is to succeed and not end in failure, leaving the position worse than it was before.

Nothing else can dissolve suspicion and fear. There is much more power in brave unilateral action than in $E=MC^2$ power that builds, not destroys, builds lasting human progress and civilization. The point the West, including Russia, has reached after discarding religious values has brought the world again to a truer vision of these discarded values. The road to religion must now be taken or else we shall be lost.

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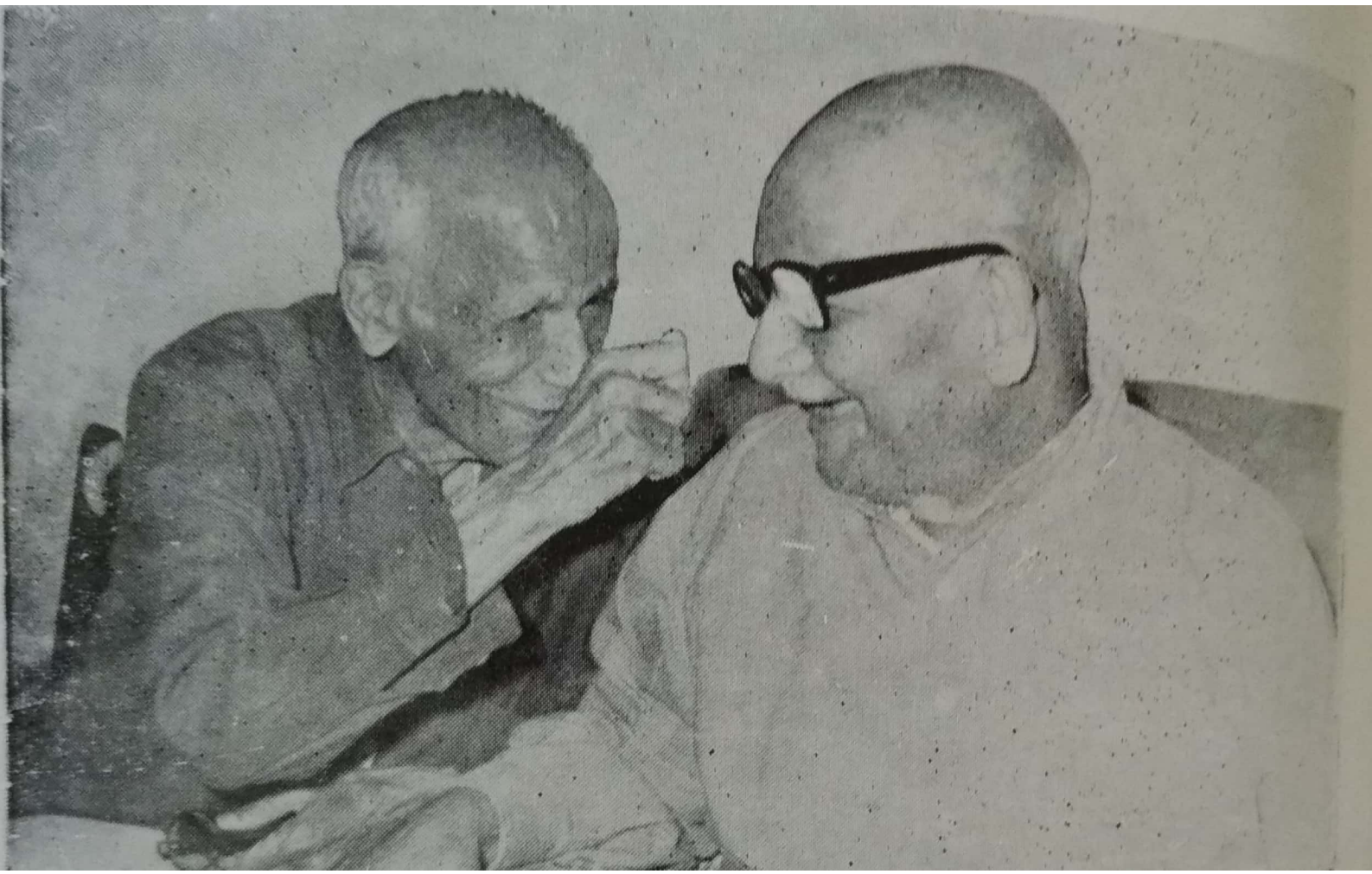

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Indian *milieu*

A variety of national problems of urgent concern to every patriot is covered by the selections in this group. Rajaji shows himself almost prophetic in his assessment of trends and consequences of ill-thought out policies. His vivid awareness of unperceived implications of policies and administrative acts makes him speak with unruffled calm and dauntless courage.

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Our democracy

THE successful working of parliamentary democracy depends on two factors; first, on a broad measure of agreement among all classes of citizens about the objectives of government; secondly, on the existence of a two-party system, in which each of the big political groups possesses effective and continuous leadership and is strong enough to take over the responsibilities of government when the majority of the country's voters wish it. If political opinion does not succeed in crystallizing into two fairly evenly balanced groups, the semblance of democracy may survive but real parliamentary democracy will not be there. When one party remains always in power, and dissent is dissipated among unorganized individuals and relatively insignificant groups which do not and cannot coalesce, government will inevitably become totalitarian.

A strong Opposition is essential for the health of democratic government. In a democracy based on universal suffrage, government of the majority without an effective Opposition is like driving a donkey on whose back you put the whole load in one bundle. The two-party system steadies movement by putting a fairly equal load into each pannier. In the human body also, two eyes and two ears aid a person to place the objects seen and heard. A single-party democracy soon loses its sense of proportion. It sees, but cannot place things in perspective or apprehend all sides of a question. This is the position in India today.

The domination by the Congress Party of the political scene is a product of history rather than of electoral success. Electoral successes are the result of this domination, not its cause. In order to justify the leadership that has resulted

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from history, the Congress Party has swung well to the Left. Left and history have operated cumulatively, and as a result the Right elements are depressed and disorganized, leaving the Congress Party in irremovable power. Irremovability, in fact, makes parliamentary democracy non-existent. In such circumstances it is inevitable that the party should become more important than Parliament. Differences of opinion may exhibit themselves within the party. If the discipline and authority of the party executive does not altogether choke 'self-criticism', a two-party pattern may develop within the party itself. The leader will take decisions in accordance with majority opinion in the party. This may be deemed to be a partial alleviation of totalitarianism, but even this may not happen if the leader be an overwhelming force by himself, in which case the party may not be able to divide itself even within closed doors. The mechanics of unadulterated dictatorship would then operate unhindered.

What is wanted to save parliamentary democracy is an Opposition that will operate not privately and behind the closed doors of the party meeting, but openly and through the electorate. Many people who would agree with this are divided as to the nature of the Opposition that is needed. Without inviting any semantic controversy, let me briefly explain the mechanics of Left and Right. The Left consist of people who demand changes in order to bring about a speedy advance in the welfare of the people and more even distribution of it among all sections. Every change must necessarily produce dislocation, disturbances and distress corresponding to the friction and the jolts and creaks in a machine. But life, individual and collective, is different from a machine. The pain involved in change falls on living human beings, and must be taken into account in any orderly advance. A party on the Right, as it is called, gives expression to these distresses and disturbances, which are not less real or important than the need for change and progress.

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Since, as I have said, the Congress Party has swung to the Left, what is wanted for the body politic is not an ultra or outer-Left, but a strong and articulate Right. The people of India, however docile they may ordinarily appear, are not just clay. Life, not being a mechanical system of forces but full of complex sentiments and feelings, the creaks and jolts caused by change are painful realities that have to be borne by living people in all grades of society, whose patterns of life are the product of long history. The distress is not dissipated into the stratosphere, but strikes at the living, sensitive nerves of men, women and children.

The pain of change is a simple-looking phrase that sums up all that follows from over-taxation, unemployment, high prices, exploitation by the newly-favoured classes and groups, unbalanced family budgets, and the hysteria resulting from all these things in themselves, and from the ordinary individual's sense of his own impotence in face of them. Those who suffer these impacts would welcome a parliamentary party that would compel attention to these creaks and jolts and disturbances in life, and which would meet the Left on level terms and, by testing and measuring both proposed legislation and day-to-day administration, would challenge the wisdom of the governing party and compel modification when those in power act in a way which would produce more pain than profit to the community. This is the function of the Right, and there is a widespread demand for such a party. Those who are interested in the conservative aspect of progress should therefore exert themselves to build up such an Opposition.

The best elements in the governing party are quite aware of the quasi-totalitarianism implicit in the Congress Party's dominant position and of the need for a strong Opposition to make parliamentary democracy a reality. But it is not their business to do what is the proper task of those who feel the pain of Leftist change.

A particular ideology, or even a slogan without much precise meaning, may so seize men's minds that people may

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fail to organize themselves into an effective Opposition even though there may be a sizeable volume of opinion to support a contrary view. Although there is today abundant material for a powerful Opposition, hypnotic fear and the pressure of individual interests operate to prevent the gathering together of the forces. Day-to-day life cannot be carried on without appeals for favours of all kinds from the government in power, and any effort in the direction of forming an Opposition party must involve sacrifice and considerable risk on the part of those who would make such a venture. Sacrifice comes naturally with revolutions but conservative wisdom does not excite a similar emotion. Reason generates fear, and men of experience are inclined to political caution in the personal sense. Distress is accepted with fatalism, not with the spirit of sacrifice which is determined not to allow similar distresses to be inflicted on others. Unless the conservatives realize their duty, throw off their dejection, overcome their fears and unite to build a worthy Opposition, parliamentary democracy in India has a dismal future. Parties which are to the left of the Congress can never hope to function as more than prodding ginger-groups, since it is quite unrealistic for them to imagine themselves as alternatives to a government which is itself prepared to go as far to the left as it is possible to do and which has installed itself on the crest of historic success.

There is another factor that must be taken into account in India. The centrifugal force of regional interests cuts across all political issues. In a country of this size, with all the differing conditions prevailing in the various States, regional interests and issues arising from them in the effort to build welfare overshadow other matters. This creates an additional and great obstacle to two-party polarization in politics. Each regional interest is a solid reality, and this fact tends to impose on Parliament a chequered pattern which in Westminster is only faintly perceptible in Scottish and Welsh nationalism.

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The solution for this problem is not to keep blowing scorn at regional feelings, but to concede greater autonomy to the States, so as to minimize regional thinking and eliminate the pressure of regional interest at the Centre, and to make the Centre an instrument for the broadest policies and not, as now, one for dealing with every tank bund, school, hospital and social service club. This statement about the Centre may seem exaggerated, but it is not. During the last few years the tendency to centralize has grown to proportions which are both ridiculous and alarming.

A 'Council of State' in a truer sense than what is now at Delhi is called for, wherein regional interests could be represented without reference to political parties, and whose powers should be other than those of a mere registering chamber. But the main remedy lies not in the remodelling of the Council of State, but in a much greater autonomy of the States themselves. The legislatures of the States and the administration of their governments should be run on the parliamentary model, while the Centre gradually crystallizes into a true federal authority. Federal powers, on issues other than foreign affairs and defence, should shrink to the barest minimum, while the powers exercised by the States should expand very greatly.

During the period of transition to greater regional autonomy, politics in the States may take a curious course. Conflict of opinion will naturally develop around the issue of division of powers between the States and the Union. The Congress Party in all the States during this period is bound to be a Unionist or Centrist party, the Opposition being a party pledged to conserve and increase local autonomy. Until a balance is reached, centrists would try to create emotion around slogans of national unity, while provincialists would fight zealously for the interests of the region. These healthy struggles would cut across and minimize caste and sub-caste politics, which in itself would be a great gain for efficiency and integrity in administration.

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The growth of a vigorous localist party in each State, without distinctions arising from caste feeling, will save provincial governments from deterioration on account of unchecked power in the hands of a majority.

Whatever may be the political structure, the people want fair and impartial, as well as efficient administration. In an environment dominated by family and communal loyalties and attachments, parochial authority quickly causes deterioration among officials. All-round progress and the elimination of unhealthy practices would be largely secured if, while the States are given larger powers, the personnel of administration all over India—Federal as well as State—are kept under the strict and independent guardianship of an all-India body, consisting of very senior officials, whose concern would be to maintain professional quality in the various services, and to protect the officials against political pressures and victimization. This should not interfere with greater devolution of authority to the States. The professional aspect of administration is different from the execution of policy. The defence forces, the police, and the administrative services should be true to their own standards of efficiency and character and be above party politics. They should carry out government policies irrespective of whatever party may be in power. Their discipline must therefore be self-sustained. Efficiency, independence and integrity in officials are necessary both for Federal and State affairs, and the more the services are released from political pressure and temptations to discriminate unfairly on account of political or communal influences, the better it will be for all concerned; for government as well as Opposition, and certainly for the people governed. An efficient administrative machine is absolutely necessary if democracy is to result in that general happiness which is our aim.

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Substance of freedom

THREE decades ago the phrase 'substance of freedom' was used in a sense that is almost forgotten now. Gandhiji pleaded for the 'substance of freedom' being given to India although the British connection might be retained. That compromise was an important bridge-head in the controversy of those days.

Now the same words 'substance of freedom' may be used in connection with the controversy over the internal question of how far citizens are free in a socialist polity. Nations may enjoy the substance of freedom even though the British connection may still be there as in Canada or Australia. And under certain conditions they may not have the substance of freedom even though the British connection may still be there as in Canada or Australia. And under certain conditions they may not have the substance of freedom even if they are free from the British or other connection. We may have achieved political freedom as a nation, but the nation may be so governed as to rob individuals of the substance of freedom. The sun may be out of an eclipse, but clouds of the sun's own making may still hide the sun from us.

As appeals for right conduct, all moral exhortations make sense only when addressed to men who are free to choose. If citizens' lives are interfered with and controlled in numerous significant directions, it is useless to talk of freedom. There can be no personal freedom without economic freedom and this freedom goes down in a steep curve under socialist economy.

The border disputes between the State and the citizen are more important than the border disputes, for example, between Mysore and Maharashtra. The adjustments bet-

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ween the freedom of the citizen and the majority rule which the citizen must accept in parliamentary democracy are of the greatest significance to his life. Freedom is an illusion if the State is raised to the level of the final owner of all things and master of all activities and the citizen only a tool in the employ of the State.

The State is not just a word spelt with five letters but the will of a majority of people with whom you may be in complete disagreement and who rigidly control the opinions of even the individuals composing that majority. Party government makes the frontier between the State and the citizen very important, because the choice is not between right and wrong, but between your opinion and that of others who are just the same in all respects as yourself but who happen to be able, for a variety of causes, to commandeer more votes in their favour.

That the organization called the State is necessary for modern human existence and progress must be conceded. But it is erroneous to assume that nature or expediency demands the omnipotence of the State. Its power must be strictly limited if the sense of freedom is important, for ultimately that sense lies in the individual's consciousness and nowhere else. The citizen must be free and feel that he is free.

What should be the limitations on the power of the State is the real and important question. 'What are the frontiers of the citizen's freedom?' is the form the question takes in a socialist State. The assumption behind the question as thus put is wrong. It is the citizen that is the reality and the tangible and unalterable fact. His freedom must be taken for granted for all mechanism which may be good or bad, being made in parliamentary democracies out of a majority of votes and many other circumstances not altogether perfect or even good. The frontiers of this mechanism created by citizens for their good must be strictly and carefully limited. The frontiers of the citizen's freedom

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must be as wide as possible. The benefit of the doubt must ever go to the latter.

In a socialist polity the State claims all power and what remains may belong to the citizens. In a free polity the citizens are free, and just what power is needed for ordered co-operation is given to the State. It is not a mere matter of words but one of very great significance whether, in fixing the limits between the State and its citizens, we go on the principle that the citizen is the primary and the State secondary, or whether we go on the reverse principle. We should have maximum freedom for the citizen and minimum power for the State under one principle. If we proceed on the opposite basis, we shall have minimum freedom for the citizen and maximum power for the officials of the State. The former is what the Father of the Nation wanted. The latter is what prevails in the socialist States of China and Russia.

The angle of approach is important. It greatly affects the course of the necessary compromises between freedom and regulation when details are to be worked out. It is important to preserve the initiative and the incentive of the citizen ; for the power and stamina and the progress of a people depend on this and not on the regulations that the State imposes. The individual's energy is at the base of all productive activity, while all that the State can claim is what it needs for maintaining order and effective co-operation. Its purpose is negative, in whatever words that negative may be clothed. The positive source and the mechanism for energy are the individual's potential which must enjoy the maximum opportunity and only the necessary minimum retardation. A socialist State not applying the whip of compulsory labour is ever only a retarding mechanism. If it remains true to its professions of abstention from compulsion, it is a drag and not a help.

Not only was the Father of the Nation interested in minimum government, but the Constitution-makers who gave us the law in 1950 laid down the frontiers very clearly

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when they wrote down the chapter on Fundamental Rights. These rights include the economic freedom of the citizen which are now the subject matter of a severe attack on the part of the forces of the State and the Congress Party. The ruling party has decided that India should be a socialist State, which means that all the boundary disputes between the citizen and government should be decided in favour of the latter. The ruling party fights from a position of advantage against anyone that challenges this policy. The Congress Party rules and holds the strings of economic life and holds elections with all those advantages. It claims that it is a fair fight, which it certainly is not.

The substance of freedom is for this reason in great jeopardy. Those who realize the importance of winning this battle must see that all available courage is summoned and the battle fought with heroic determination. The ruling party will win easily if this is not done and the economic hold on the citizen will be further tightened making a second battle hopeless. Those who are most entangled in the State's tentacles must be the first to realize the significance and supreme importance of the struggle and throw away the many temptations to drift.

Nothing fails so despicably as fear, and nothing so succeeds as courage. Tyranny cannot be overcome by fear but only by courage, the courage to give a straight battle. To flee in terror or hide oneself away from the straight fight and hope to succeed in compromises on details will end in a rout. At best such tactics will only result in getting the better of your fellowmen which is a miserable game.

The call of freedom is loud and insistent. The future depends on the response. When the battle for freedom was fought against Britain we called for courage and the taking of risk and the response was such as brought success. In the battle for the freedom of the citizen, which is the true substance of national freedom, there is the same call for courage and the taking of all the risks involved, and may it be that the response will be equally good!

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Weakening the States

AMBITIONS to build national greatness for India have had always to fight the fissiparous tendencies that are inherent in our continental psychology. The centrifugal pull has always been a very strong and permanent feature of our culture and national life. Even the pressure of danger from a foreign enemy did not mitigate the *malaise*, but in fact led to overt or secret alliance with him on the part of some of the units. The explanation is this, and it can be appreciated by people who have suffered under heavy maladministration. Bitter memories of unjust rule made them prefer even an entirely foreign regime which promised to render some kind of justice.

Once, when returning from the Ajanta caves, I stopped at a village on the way where I was told the last remains of Emperor Aurangazeb were entombed. I entered the humble structure in which the Emperor's tomb was housed. As I saw the plain, small tomb, the Taj, Fatehpur-Sikri and the great mausoleum of Akbar flitted across the screen of my mind. In this tomb of Aurangazeb I saw more instruction than in all the glories of architecture that the other tombs and noble Moghul structures displayed. Frustration of hopes and vanities through inevitable law stared me in the face as if exhibited in solid form.

The rational Indian mind of modern times sways between desire and compromise, between the logic of unitary efficiency and a compromise with the hard realities of centrifugal forces. In some moods the one appeals and at other times one is forced to reconcile oneself to the other. Of course, different mentalities react differently to this perpetual problem. Again, apart from logic and appraisement of values, minorities in all regions tend to a preference for

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unitary government while communities in an impregnable local position of advantage prefer the small State and local autonomy.

Leaving history aside, even today in independent India we have not yet succeeded in stabilising conditions on account of this same ancient infirmity. It may be after all that the structure of national freedom in some countries must be federal and can never be unitary, and India may be one such country. The parts are not strong enough or isolated enough to be separate national governments. Neither are they coherent enough to make a single unitary State. There is no doubt an ineffable Indian unity, but it is not sufficiently solid for political building. The feeling for self-government itself becomes a force to oppose subordination to a larger democracy, where freedom must submit to be controlled by an all-India majority.

A federal form of national unity is not an unworthy status, if we could frankly recognize the goal and work for it. The dynamic elements that were engaged in the ambitions and political evolution of India in the past were personal, dynastic or oligarchic. Their ambitions could not content themselves with a federal goal. Every historic attempt at empire was to enforce total submission. Fissiparous forces always proved too strong in the end for such imperial ambitions. Break-ups followed each temporary success with accelerated speed. With the passing of politics from dynasties to the people, greater hopes may be entertained of a rational fusion on the basis of a true and equal federation of regional units. But unfortunately under the spell of democracy we are apt to fail to recognize the inherent difficulty of our continental culture. As a result we fail to perceive the real solution. We work for an impossible unitary political structure which no doubt would be more rational and lead to greater efficiency and strength, if only it were possible. This, however, is not the case. Success, however temptingly grand for sometime, will prove to be but temporary. The centrifugal pull that is

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Indian Constitution that we framed did not fail to take note of this. But the history of Indian politics after 1947 has shown how the temptation has continuously worked towards centralization. Power is sought to be concentrated in the Centre and the States are slowly and steadily rendered unimportant.

There are some whose rational minds entertain the hope for an intensification of this very process until it should lead to a great, efficient and strong unitary State. They may be pleased with the recent decision that the Centre alone will raise public loans for capital expenditure and that the States should be content with the small savings programmes. They may also welcome the tendency of the Centre gradually sucking up all taxation powers, practically leaving to the State governments only the work of local party management. (The difference between the affairs of the ruling party and the function of government is appreciated only in academic discussion). We need not be surprised if proposals are soon made to convert land revenue into an excise duty on crops and to give over the sales tax completely to the Centre. The States are being reduced pretty rapidly to the status of grant-receiving corporations. This may appeal to some who are Centrally-minded, but it would be a house built on sand. It cannot last ; for the time will arrive when the centrifugal forces will assert themselves and when it will be found there is not power enough in any personality at the Centre to hold the flying parts.

The wiser attitude is to recognize the permanent nature of the soil in which our political structure has to be fixed. The federal form of national unity should be recognized as inevitable for stability, and every thing should be done in

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not take one to the goal, whatever be the high purpose with which we make the journey. Be it personal or other ambition or be it a highly laudable national and democratic objective, the mistake in calculation must produce identical results in either case. Stability demands that in the application and further development of our Constitution we should strengthen the States and keep the federal aim in view and avoid the error of seeking to weaken the units in the hope of making a strong Centre.

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Stifling economic enterprise

It is remarkable that in this scientific and rationalistic age, centralized economic planning by the State has been raised to the pedestal of a holy cult. The dominant theme in India for some years past has been the economic uplift of the masses, and centralized all-out planning has been resorted to as the means of promoting that object. And this, in spite of reiterated lip-service to decentralization. The major fault of centralized, comprehensive planning is that it imposes a monolithic burden on a people composed of diverse elements at all levels and in all occupations. The achievements that it might show in a few selected areas are bought at the cost of the freedom and enterprise of the individual. The individual and his creative ability are smothered by a proliferating bureaucracy and innumerable rules and regulations.

Planning should not be looked upon as an end in itself. It is essential to place it in its proper perspective and to realize its political consequences. In the life of a nation, 12 or 15 years is but an infinitesimally small period. Broader visions should not be obscured by momentary fancies or by the exaggerated importance given to certain things. Everyone knows that it was Soviet Russia which implemented first the concept of centralized, comprehensive State planning. When it was realized in the West that the industrial revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had led to concentration of capital in a few hands, the socialist idea of State ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange was developed in Europe, in order supposedly to ensure equitable distribution of the goods and services produced by large-scale mechanization. This

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...went further and resorted to every weapon in its armoury, including force and fraud, to bring about the same end. Both sought to overlook the laws of the free market. Through Central State planning, both socialism and communism brought into being and promoted the huge Leviathan of the State, subordinating the individual to the dictates of a small band of people who maintained their own power and covered all their sins of omission and commission with the fog of a paradise to come.

A 'command economy' thus came into existence. The planners arrogated to themselves the wisdom required for assessing and mobilizing all the resources of the country, determining a comprehensive scheme of priorities, ordering industrial and agrarian growth along certain pre-determined patterns, and fixing prices and patterns of distribution of the goods and services produced. They thus undermined the freedom of mutual services as well as democracy. It is yet to be shown whether this 'command economy' of centralized, comprehensive planning guarantees efficiency in production. The odds are against it. On the distribution front, it has already been proved a tragic failure. During his visit to India a couple of years ago, Anastas Mikoyan acknowledged that the difference between the lowest and highest paid in Russia ranged from 1 : 59. According to others the differences is 1 : 100 or more. The figures, by themselves, do not give an idea of the distribution picture which was indeed the socialist carrot before the donkey. We have to include what cannot be expressed in terms of money, all the pain inflicted on the souls of people and all the bodily miseries they are made to undergo in the name of comprehensive planning.

After liquidating millions of people, communism has given birth to a new class and a new feudalism instead of abolish-
ing class distinct...

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than 4 per cent of the people, enjoy all the privileges of life in the name of over 200 million people who are forced to do hard work. So much for centralized State planning in a regime unencumbered by democratic notions. Though these things are well known, they need reiteration today because we are apt to be carried away into imitating communist policies and methods in our blind admiration for their achievements, overlooking the cost, which is a grim human tragedy. The Prime Minister, in his presidential address at the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress in 1936, made a statement which looks pathetic today in the light of subsequent disclosures about the actual state of affairs in communist countries. I refer to it because Nehru is essentially the same man now as he was when he made this statement. His admiration of power and achievement is still misleading him. He said:

> It is interesting to read in that monumental and impressive record, the Webb's new book on Russia, how the whole Soviet structure is based on a wide and living democratic foundation. Russia is not supposed to be a democratic country after the Western pattern, and yet we find the essentials of democracy present in far greater degree among the masses there than anywhere else. The 600,000 towns and villages there have a vast democratic organization, each with its own soviet, constantly discussing, debating, criticizing, helping in the formulation of policy, electing representatives to higher committees. This organization of citizens covers the entire population over 18 years of age. There is yet another vast organization of the people as producers, and a third, equally vast, as consumers. And thus scores of millions of men and women are constantly taking part in the discussion of public affairs and actually in the administration of the country. There has been no such practical application of the democratic process in history.

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As I have said above, Nehru's admiration of Russian success has not come to an end. It is taking different and various forms at national cost. Modern States have all to do some sort of planning to keep the economy on an even keel. But that need not necessarily be comprehensive, centralized planning which inevitably leads to the restriction of democratic liberties. Physical controls, rationing, inflation, forced savings, that is, large cuts in real wages, and a relentless subordination of life to dictatorship are required to achieve anything like near-success in that type of planning. The lesson from the history of our contemporaries is that planning should be subject to, and in consonance with, democratic principles. Such planning is practicable as well as desirable.

As against this, planning has proceeded in our country on the assumption that people do not know what is good for them and, therefore, they must be told what to do. It has proceeded on the basis that a few bright persons are omniscient and are capable of directing the destinies of the nation in an infallible manner. We have had many warnings to teach us humility. The Bhakra dam, which was described as the new and real temple for India, can be aptly described as the projection of our folly in thinking that big names are the best things. It must come as a revelation to all of us that, apart from crores of rupees sunk into this mammoth project, the danger of anything going wrong with the dam would be an inundation of indescribable magnitude. The bigger a man builds, the smaller becomes his control over the things he builds. What I deplore is not the building of this particular dam but the megalomania for big projects. These projects have a political corollary—the centralization of all authority, to the detriment of the future of the nation. Until and unless we develop to a stage when the requisite administrative set-up, technical skill and, above all, conscience are all geared to the needs of such projects, it is foolhardy to venture on them.

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Mechanization saves bodily labour and ensures more leisure. For these reasons, mechanization has to be welcomed. But to force mechanization at a rate inconsistent with the availability of technical skills to deal with breakdowns in the vast rural area is to prescribe remedies worse than the disease. Agriculture is our basic asset for leading to the growth of a viable industrial sector. The machine and their operation should be introduced at a place consonant with the needs and genius of our people. Changing the structure of ownership and tenures at a time when a food crisis is admitted would be like changing horses in mid-stream.

The application of misleading statistical standards to our economic performance is wrong. Our economy is still largely a barter economy. In the rural areas a number of transactions are not measured in terms of money. It is a common and good practice in villages to pay farm labour with foodgrains and a small cash sum rather than entirely in cash. Increases in the issue of salaries to government employees and the expansion of the official set-up falsify calculations of the increase in national income. Apart from this, to emphasize the statistical methods in terms of money is to give a materialistic direction to the general mentality of the people by over-emphasizing the money angle. This is a subtle evil which has already done great harm. Money is important, but unselfishness and moral qualities are more important even for economic progress.

The Government resorts to policies which depreciate the value of the currency. It pumps money into circulation in paying the bills for the ambitious projects it has undertaken. The fixed-income groups in all sectors suffer greatly as a result of deficit financing and are perplexed as to the means of livelihood for their future. Savings become meaningless, because the value of money depreciates year after year. Without savings, there can be no investment, and no increase

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cies, whatever lip-service may be rendered to the doctrine of decentralization. Such decentralization as impinges favourably on electoral plans and programmes is favoured, and not that which really leads to efficiency. The policy of a regulated economy in the production and distribution of food has to be carried to its logical conclusion, as Ajit Prasad Jain confessed when he resigned from the Central Food and Agriculture Ministry. When socialists and communists talk of decentralization, they mean decentralization of minor powers in execution. The decision-making authority is always the *elite*, the small core, which arrogates to itself all wisdom and infallibility.

The megalomania that vitiates the present development policies is illustrated by the stupendous folly of the contemplated nuclear power station. What we need is not just big projects, but useful and fruitful projects. There is nothing inherently wrong with bigness, just as there is nothing inherently good in bigness. Big dams are good, but more essential are thousands of small projects which could be and would be executed by the enthusiasm of the local people because they directly and immediately improve their lives. So also in the setting up of industries, there should be encouragement to industries producing consumer goods, which give content and meaning to the phrase 'standard of living' and which can be produced in small and medium scale industries. Private enterprise should be fostered by every means available and not treated as a dangerous enemy. Industrial enterprise would then spread at various levels in the countryside and reduce the tensions that attach to centralized industrialism.

The federal structure of India is not only not used but is sought to be sabotaged. For instance, although industries are today listed by the Constitution under the State Schedule (excepting strategic industries), those who wish to start industries must all rush to New Delhi for permits and comply with or otherwise negotiate a host of regulations. As a consequence unemployment stands

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unchanged. It will be argued that there should be co-ordination and uniformity. But economic development takes place faster when diversity is permitted and the fullest use is made of local, physical and social conditions by those who know them.

One of the most neglected aspects of planning in this country is the gearing up of the administrative machinery and the simplification of procedures. It is no use directing appeals of patriotism to clerks whose personal lives cannot permit room for any thought beyond their day-to-day household troubles. Unless conditions are radically changed to provide incentives, to remove inefficiency and to fix responsibility, economic development in this country will be hampered by the very administrative machinery which is supposed to help it.

The role of the Government should be that of a catalyst in stimulating economic development while individual initiative and enterprise are given the fullest play. The Government can do a great deal by way of providing a network of highways and village roads, in improving waterways and developing small harbours, improving communication and transit facilities, which would all serve to boost the economy. Many important things have been neglected because the Government has forgotten them in its obsession with a 'command economy'. Wise planning means Government help to foster private enterprise and self-help among individuals. Otherwise, there can be no real progress.

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German verdict

मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम् ।

—*Isopanishad*

The free society is not to be built on envy.

—LIONEL ROBBINS

A Humane Economy is the title of a recent book by Wilhelm Ropke.* This internationally acclaimed economist leads an epic attack against the economy and polity which the present Government of India have unfortunately adopted as the panacea for all our ills.

As against socialism, Wilhelm Ropke champions an economic order ruled by freedom in the shape of free prices and free markets. He explains how this is the only economic order compatible with human freedom, and with the rule of law, the fundamental conditions without which life can have no meaning or dignity. People may be led by humane convictions to declare themselves in sympathy with socialism, but they fail to see what this ultimately means. It means a social and economic order which destroys human freedom.

The technique of socialism is economic planning, nationalization, the erosion of property, and the cradle-to-the-grave welfare State. The irrefutable testimony of the last fifteen years shows that the technique of the age-old free economy leads to well-being, freedom, the rule of law, and the more even distribution of power, and to international co-operation.

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* *A Humane Economy* by Wilhelm Ropke translated into English by Elizabeth Henderson ; Henry Regnary ; Chicago, 1960.

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There is profound ethical reason why an economy governed by free prices, free markets and free competition implies moral health and plenty, while the socialist economy means moral sickness, disorder, and lower productivity. The free economic system releases and utilizes the forces inherent in individual self-assertion. The socialist system suppresses them and wears itself out in opposing inherent natural forces. A government which, in peace time, relies on exchange control, price control, and confiscatory taxation has little, if any, more moral justification than the individual who, as against it, defends himself by circumventing or breaking the law. Economic policy should be adopted to man, not man to economic policy. This is humane as well as politically wise. The socialist intellectuals suffer from the *libido dominandi* and nurse open or secret ambitions to occupy positions of command in the economic system they moralise for. Their eye is on power, while they pretend compassion.

The socialist ideal is marked by mass and concentration. Individual responsibility, life and thought are to be smothered. It wants collective thought and feeling. The small circles—from the family up—with their human warmth and natural solidarity have to give way before mass and concentration, before the rootless amorphous conglomeration of people in cities and industrial centres, before the anonymous bureaucracy of giant concerns, and ultimately of government which holds this crumbling mass together through the coercive machinery of the welfare State, the police and the tax screw. The home is to be substituted by the street. As against this, we ought to stand up for decentralization and de-proletarianization. People need to be taken out of the mass and given roots again. We shall save ourselves only if more and more of us 'have the courage to take counsel with our own souls in the midst of the socialist and planning bustle and to bethink ourselves of the firm, enduring and proved

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truths of life'. It is in this religious conviction that Wilhelm Ropke writes this book.

Communism has had its day. As a spiritual and moral power it is certainly on the decline. The external military power of the leading communist States is no doubt greater than before. But if we correctly interpret developments in satellite countries as well as in Russia itself, we can see that the communist faith and appeal have entered a phase of decline. But though it is a fact that the star of communism as a substitute for religion is declining, we have the development of a new Gorgon's head. What we have to fear is the communism of the non-communist governments, the creeping inflation and the psychological deterioration closely connected with inflation in States following the welfare State policy in their apprehensions about communism to success at the polls. Personal comforts are more highly rated than freedom, law, and personality. The individual means less and less, mass and collectivity more and more, the net of servitude which hems in personal development in the welfare State becomes ever denser, more closely meshed and inescapable. The centre of gravity of decisions keeps shifting upwards from the individuals, the family and the small compact group up to anonymous institutions. The power of the State grows uncontrollably. Demagogy and pressure groups turn politics into the art of finding the way of least resistance and immediate expediency or into a device for channelling other people's money to one's own group. Law and the principles of law become uncertain.

Once the individual had an inalienable right to life, liberty and property. But today in the "free world", the last named pillar is badly dilapidated. Few realize that its fall would pull down the pillar of liberty as well. The remaining pillar, the right to the inviolability of life cannot long stand alone. If property is degraded into precarious *de facto* possession depending on the whim of government or on the voters' favour, if property becomes a hostage in

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the hands of those who own less or nothing, if property together with its inseparable concomitant, the law of inheritance, ceases to be one of the primary rights which need no other justification than that of *dharma*, then the end of free society is in sight.

No great perspicacity is needed to recognize the close kinship between lack of respect for property and indifference to the value of money. Erosion of property and erosion of money go together. Resistance to this process of deterioration has been successful in Switzerland, Belgium, Italy and Germany. These have extricated themselves from the morass of inflation and economic controls. The striking success of Germany in this direction is met with silence among the protagonists of controls, or with statistical juggling. Arguments are brought up by some that currency reform and Marshall Aid were the "good fairies" rather than the market economy, or that it was all due to the special fact that Germans were a hard-working, frugal and thrifty people. These evasive explanations have all been set at rest. The German success with the market economy has put collectivism on the defence. The German recovery is due to the courage and good sense which liberated the economy from the fetters of planning which had hampered or paralyzed the incentive and regulatory effects of free prices and free competition. As a result of the German success, nationalization and planning, the catch phrases of the immediate post-war period, have lost their appeal, and even in the socialist camp the response is now weak where the voters are intelligent and mature.

Economic freedom like any other freedom requires eternal vigilance. As Goethe said, it must be conquered anew each day. "Residues of collectivism like unexploded mines are lying scattered about even in the countries liberated from controls". People are still in the habit of taking refuge in official regulations whenever a new problem turns up. They still tend in the name of economic and social security, to heap new tasks on the Government and

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thereby new burdens on the tax-payer. Again and again we see ourselves cheated of the hope of reducing to tolerable limits the crushing weight of taxation, which in the long run is incompatible with a free or even moderately sound economy and society. The Government's budgets seek to absorb a high percentage of the national income through various kinds of compulsory contributions. This reinforces inflationary pressure and has a disintegrating and ultimately paralyzing effect on the economy. Households and firms make financial decisions with an eye towards the tax-collector rather than towards the consumers and the market. Incentive is weakened at all levels and in all spheres. "Saving is depressed below the level necessary to finance growth-investment without inflationary credit-expansion. The rate of interest loses its essential efficacy, because as a cost factor it takes second place after tax payments". The combination of over-expansion of public expenditure and the re-orientation of its purposes in socialist directions constitutes a source of continuous inflationary pressure.

The Government, spurred by the vested interests of the civil service, tries to acquire more and more management of industries and trade, and seeks to create strongholds of public power, monopoly and party patronage. It fosters an irrational, hostile attitude towards everything that goes by the name of capital or entrepreneur, with a stubborn misconception of the latter's task and the conditions in which he can function.

Concentration is the great evil of our times: concentration of the power of government and administration, concentration of economic and social power under the State, concentration of decision and responsibility which become thereby more and more anonymous, unchallengeable and inscrutable, concentration of people in organizations, towns and industrial centres, and firms and factories. The common denomination of the social disease of our times is concentration. Collectivism and totalitarianism are the extreme lethal stages of the disease. The bloated

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Colossus of the State, with its crushing taxation and boundless expenditure, is chiefly to blame for the inflation that is a chronic evil of our times.

An excess of government intervention deflecting the national market economy from the paths prescribed by competition and price mechanism, an accumulation of prohibitions and commands, the blunting of incentives, official price-fixing and restrictions on primary economic freedom necessarily lead to mistakes, bottlenecks, inefficiency and failure of performances, and imbalances of all kinds. With the proliferation of intervention, they end up in general chaos. The disturbances caused by intervention are taken as proof of the inadequacy of intervention and become a pretext for yet more and stronger intervention.

Wilhelm Ropke quotes from Tocqueville who saw what was coming:

> The government covers the surface of society with a network of complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is softened, bent and guided. Men are not forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. It does not destroy, but it prevents existence. It does not tyrannize but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes and stupefies a people, till the nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals of which the government is the shepherd.

The dominating motive of the welfare State today is not compassion but envy. The language of the old paternal government is becoming a screen that hides the new crusade against anything which dares exceed the average, be it income, wealth or performance. In the name of economic equality and to the accompaniment of the progressive

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blunting of individual responsibility a substantial part of private income is constantly sucked into the pumping engine of the welfare State and diverted by it with considerable friction-losses. Everything into the same pot, everything out of the same pot—this is the ideal.

The individual and his sense of responsibility constitute the secret mainspring of society, and this mainspring is being broken by the welfare State. "It is surely the mark of a sound society", says Ropke, "that the centre of gravity of decision and responsibility lies midways between the two extremes of individual and State, within genuine and small communities of which the most indispensable primary and natural unit is the family. And surely it is our task to encourage the development of the great variety of small and medium communities and thereby of group assistance within circles which still have room for voluntary action, a sense of responsibility and human contact and which avoid the cold impersonality of mass social services".

If the State increasingly takes upon itself to hand out welfare and security on all sides, first to the advantage of one group, then of another, it must degenerate into an institution which fosters moral disintegration and prepares its own eventual doom.

People do not always realize that when they turn to the State for the fulfilment of their wishes, their claims can be satisfied only at the expense of others. A money claim on the State is always an indirect claim on somebody else whose taxes contribute to the sum demanded. It is a mere transfer of purchasing power through the medium of the compulsory powers of the State. The more widely the principle of the welfare State is applied, the closer comes the moment when the giant pumping engine turns out to be a deceiver of everybody and becomes an end in itself, which eventually serves no one except those who make a living out of its manipulation, namely, the bureaucrats. These naturally have an interest in obscuring the facts.

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Today the time of illusions is past. It has become clear and it is widely realized, especially in Great Britain, that if one seriously wishes to put the welfare State into practice, one has to use taxation to stir up income distribution at all levels and has to draw even on the lowest income groups to help finance the cost (through indirect taxes as in this country, if it is impossible to levy direct taxes on the poor.) The money is conjured up from people's right pocket into their left with a detour *via* the treasury and the enormous friction-losses entailed thereby.

"It has become clear that there is a price to be paid in the form of costs of the ever-increasing State machinery, of a blunting of the will to work and of individual responsibility. Vexation at the top and envy at the bottom choke civic sense, public spirit, creative leisure, neighbourliness, generosity and genuine sense of community. What will remain is the pumping engine of Leviathan, the insatiable modern State."

The welfare State must be dismantled except for an indispensable minimum and the money thus saved left to non-governmental forms of social services. The party in power wants the machinery of the welfare State to remain so that through that machine it may perpetuate itself at the cost of the tax-payer. We have to defeat this partisan purpose. We cannot give up economic freedoms and hope to save other freedoms. Market economy and the revitalization of *vaisya dharma* are what will activate economy and preserve human freedom. Wilhelm Ropke does not use this Indian term, but this is exactly the code of ethics which he pleads for, describing it in Western terminology.

It is not poverty that leads a nation to communism, but the break-up of traditional values. And this condition is being rapidly brought about by the present rulers of India.

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Nehru heritage

LOUIS FISCHER in reviewing a book of tributes to Nehru published by John Day Company of New York mentions prominently a talk between Raja Rao (the Indian novelist settled down in France and Britain) and Jawaharlal Nehru. They met in Germany in 1930. Jawaharlalji's wife was then ill and an inpatient in a sanatorium in Europe. Raja Rao talked of India and of life in general 'with a touch of mysticism'. This, we are told, irritated Jawaharlal Nehru.

'Do you always speak like this?' exclaimed Nehru.

'You certainly believe in something, Panditji?' remonstrated Raja Rao. 'In some form of deity, in philosophy?'

'Deity, what deity?' Nehru exploded angrily. 'Three thousand years of that and where's that got us—slavery, poverty'.

'East and East did not meet' observes Louis Fischer, commenting on this incident.

When I was at college seventy years ago, the Scotch professor who was in charge of our English studies used to ask us to put extracts from the text-books we read to logical tests and work them out. Let me try that exercise over this statement of the late illustrious Prime Minister of India. (A) Indians believed in the deity and lived in more or less conformity with that belief for three thousand years. (B) They are a subject-nation and are poor. Does this prove that belief in the deity and acting in conformity with that belief 'got us' into political subjection and poverty? I protest—with all respect and affection for my departed friend undiminished—the inference is illogical. It is a common enough fallacy which angry and excited

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men fall into. All that is proved is that belief in the deity does not always serve to emancipate people from foreign rule and from poverty. It is not proved, as Jawaharlal Nehru thought, that giving up one's belief in the deity would restore people's freedom or help a nation to become prosperous.

A change-over to atheism will not lift a poor nation to prosperity. It may by a fall in moral standards even make matters worse. Nor can atheism release nations from foreign rule. 'Russia is free and is prosperous; and the Russian rulers are atheists; therefore, atheism helps people to become free and prosperous': this would not be a correct syllogism, any more than 'Americans are Christians; they became free and are prosperous; therefore Christianity helps nations to emancipate themselves and become prosperous'.

I remember the thrill Jawaharlalji felt when he was reading Sydney and Beatrice Webb denouncing capitalism and economic ompetition. He used often to refer to this in our Working Committee meetings, and Sardar Patel would be amused. In course of time when the British handed over to the Congress Party and Jawaharlalji was, in deference to Gandhiji's wishes, placed in charge, the fort was held against ruinous experiments for some time. But after Vallabhbhai Patel's death, began a slide to the commitment of India to extensive borrowing from abroad and to heavy expenditure for development plans. Finally India was by a party resolution ten years ago committed to socialism and central planning. The boycott of God also was adopted through the seductive and ambiguous phrase 'Secular State', which most people thought was a good answer to Pakistan's adherence to the Koran and only meant impartial treatment of all religions, but which was in Nehru's mind an approximation to the Soviet's aggressively negative policy towards God and religion. He felt that it was a strong and sound foundation for economic development as by implication he preached to Raja Rao in the

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Louis Fischer story. Central planning and heavy investment in heavy industries, even if it had to be borrowed money, was put in motion along with the boycott of God, with, as we now see, disastrous results to democracy and to the national economy.

Prof. Jewkes has dealt with the inherent defects of central planning and the economic illusions of State enterprise in a very comprehensive manner in his three Lindsay Lectures which have been published in book form.* Prof. Jewkes has taken great pains to find the clearest language possible to explain what governments ought to do and in what fields of activity they ought to abstain from entering or at least put a time limit to their experimentations.

Professor Jewkes says:

> De Tocqueville wrote in 1830: Everywhere the State acquires more and more direct control over the humblest members of the community, and a more exclusive power of governing each of them in his smallest concerns.....Diversity, as well as freedom, are disappearing day by day.....
>
> Forty and odd years later Cairnes wrote however: 'We are all now familiar with such commonplaces as "individuals are the best judges of their own interests"; "monopolies should not be permitted in trade"; "contracts should be free"; "taxation should be equal and should be directed towards the maintenance of the revenue and not to the guidance of commerce".'
>
> Even in 1926 Keynes referred to the strong bias in favour of *laisse faire* and of how State action to regulate the value of money, or the course of investment, or the population, provoked passionate suspicions in many upright breasts.

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* *Public and Private Enterprise* (1964). By John Jewkes, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London. Price: 12 sh. 6 d,

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known.

Edmund Burke said that one of the most delicate problems in legislation was to determine what the State ought to take upon itself to direct by its wisdom and what it ought to leave with as little interference as possible to individual exertion. Prof. Jewkes complains that social scientists, and particularly economists, do not perform their proper duties in a proper way but reconcile themselves to the idea that the main drift of the world is bound to be determined by forces over which they have no influence. The role of the economist is increasingly limited as being only that of helping governments to operate more efficiently in their own direction. The economists abstain from raising fundamental issues and prefer to restrict themselves to efforts 'to make the world run a little more smoothly along a track which they feel that society has in some mysterious way already chosen for itself'. In the debates and press comments which in democracies precede political decisions, 'economic considerations get less than their proper weight and faulty economic reasoning too often ousts the sound one'.

In pushing forward schemes for replacing private effort by State ownership and official management, Prof. Jewkes refers to the tendency of governments to underestimate costs and exaggerate returns. It is no uncommon thing for governments to keep costs discreetly in the background or to dwarf their importance by assuming that they can be met out of some future hypothetical expansion of national income. In communities where the distribution of income is unequal and where taxation on income is highly progressive, it comes to be widely thought that the majority of people are benefiting and that a small minority are meeting

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Recent studies show that in Great Britain the great majority of people pay for their own social services in taxation, rates and social insurance.

So that in the tumult which accompanies the balancing of the less tangible with the more tangible items, the standard warning that you cannot have your cake and eat it or you cannot get more than a pint out of a pint pot, or the community can always afford anything, anything so long as it gives up something else: all these tend to get pushed to one side and the economist may understandably weary of the odium which he calls down upon himself by drawing attention to these truisms.

Prof. Jewkes calls particular attention to the consequences of the expansion in size of undertakings, which fail to be adequately anticipated by governments. It is a commonplace that every organization, as it increases in size, must face the danger that further growth will bring decreasing efficiency.

Every large private business, as it gets bigger, struggles, and ultimately without effect, to resist the inertia of size. The burden of size has been the outstanding difficulty of the nationalized industries. I have no doubt that the same is true of universities, churches, armed forces and so on. The evil day can be put off but not for ever. Highly relevant illustrations of this point have been provided for us recently by the industrial mergers, which have been so common in British industry.

It is easy to understand how seductive these mergers can be. One profitable firm thinks that by absorbing another profitable firm it will make two profits instead of one. What is often left out of this calculation, and indeed is extremely difficult to calculate, is that the increased administrative burden thrown

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> on the directors of the acquiring firm may stretch their powers to the point at which they perform their duties less adequately and the whole organization suffers in consequence.

'Cabinet Ministers, and even more so in the last resort Prime Ministers, have functions which only they can perform and which cannot be divided up or delegated. So that whilst it may seem that some new activity on the part of government has been successfully undertaken, it may be that in consequence there has been a loss of effectiveness elsewhere. Because of the total pressure upon him of Cabinet affairs', says Prof. Jewkes, 'a weary Foreign Secretary may miss a move in the search for peace, or a Chancellor of the Exchequer may be denied time to ponder over ways of improving methods of taxation or of preventing inflation. I wonder how many of the blunders made by politicians in our time have been made by men wearied beyond account or broken in health through prolonged overstrain.'

There is a dangerous fallacy which has, in this connection, been exposed by Prof. Jewkes. It is claimed that a government may take responsibility for some new public service but take the whole operation out of politics and thereby escape any increase in its own administrative burdens. 'Experience in the past twenty years suggests that this view is naive. Nationalization has not taken industries out of the political arena. It has pushed them more firmly into it. Cabinets will always be tempted to court popularity by giving way to democratic pressures for the provision of goods and services on exceptionally favourable terms or to uneconomic ends.'

> It has proved impossible to give any real meaning to the distinction between matters of national interest or major policy on the one hand and matters of day-to-day importance, on the other. The process of administration cannot be split up in this way. Wise

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> policy on major matters can only be built up by careful scrutiny of day-to-day matters. No event, in the first instance, can be labelled as a minor or a major matter. The manner in which a minor event is dealt with may determine whether it becomes a major one in the operation of the organization. The very choice of what is a major and what is a minor matter (which function must surely be regarded as part of major policy) can only be exercised through day-to-day attention to what would normally be regarded as detail.

Even if it seemed otherwise desirable that the Government should undertake some new task, it is not always able to collect the necessary knowledge and develop the techniques to do what it sets out to do.

> Public enterprise relies to a much greater degree than private upon statistics and measurement as instruments of control. A small manufacturer knows from long experience the details of his own business and will depend to a lesser degree upon figures than a government department which is operating a national industry and has to determine proper scales of output and correct regional and local distributions and so on. Some eminent statisticians have for long been warning us of the rickety statistical structures upon which much economic reasoning in these days is based. Quite recently, Professor Morgenstern has left us in no doubt as to the perils we run. He shows that even with American and British figures, which are perhaps the best in the world, critical statistics are being relied upon which have very wide margins of error.

According to Prof. Jewkes, the big error fostered by over-confidence in the accuracy of economic statistics is the belief that the economic future can be predicted. 'That way lies nothing but disenchantment' says the professor.

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The odd thing is that economic soothsayers often believe that their long-term forecasts have greater reliability than their short; the further they are asked to probe into the future, the more confident they appear to feel that they can produce the right answer. 'Perhaps', observes the professor, 'the fact that the day of reckoning, in these cases, is farther off has something to do with this attitude.'

Prof. Jewkes has not much difficulty in proving his point. He refers to Marx's and Engels' dismal predictions about capitalist countries which have become famous errors and to De Tocqueville's prediction about the United States' shipbuilding and shipping industries, which also has proved famously erroneous. Experts have not learnt to avoid such mistakes made by their eminent predecessors in the past. Variable factors are even more numerous in the modern world.

Prof. Jewkes sums up what is as easy, as it is important, to remember, viz., that a government has nothing to distribute save what it first collects from the community, and that big organizations are not necessarily more efficient than smaller.

The professor would permit the State to undertake concerns displacing private ownership and management only when the following tests were passed by any such proposal:

1. Where a given expenditure would bring a larger economic return to the community but would not be undertaken by any private individual.
2. Where a given expenditure, although not necessarily yielding an economic return in the narrow sense, could nevertheless be shown to be really important to the general interest.
3. Where the individual in striving, in apparently rational fashion, for some benefit or the avoidance of some harm, would normally be led to take action which would frustrate his own purpose.

Size, far from being a virtue, constitutes the most persistent and troublesome problem in dealing with nationalized

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undertakings. This is a lesson which has been learnt in Great Britain. Nationalization has lost all its original attractions in Great Britain. But in India we have the experiment of the State Trading Corporation persisted in, notwithstanding the obvious handicaps arising out of size and heterogeneity incompatible with any effort at centralized management. That a State-managed monopoly can enable the Government to supply needy groups at low prices has proved to be an illusion. The plea is no longer heard now. The overhead charges arising out of bigness render such efforts futile. Even when a plan for improving the national level of economic prosperity has failed in respect of a near period, government expects to produce better results over a long period. 'This is based on the extraordinary belief', says Prof. Jewkes, 'that the distant future can be more clearly seen and understood than the immediate.'

Prof. Jewkes is convinced that the deeper a government involves itself in the working of the economic system, the more likely it is that it will allow its so-called economic decisions to be vitally influenced by political expediency. Lastly, Prof. Jewkes poses the clinching question: The United States has a much higher standard of living than other countries. To what can this be attributed if not to private enterprise and a free market?

The Professor also makes a new claim that the free market is exercising a strong civilizing influence. The cocksure and dismal prediction of the Webbs that capitalism would lead to the debasing of morals is not the way the world has gone. We have, on the other hand, in India wide-scale debasement of morals, at all levels, as a result of the permit-licence-quota raj replacing the free market. Positively, Prof. Jewkes claims, not without good grounds, that 'within the model of the free market lies one good chance of smoothing the frictions which develop between men on the score of religion, race, colour or social values. The market is a great civilizer'.

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Let us be warned, Prof. Jewkes says:

> The damage which is likely to follow when the impossible is attempted will be a function of the power possessed by those in control and their stubbornness in pursuing their aims. In the extreme case, when a government sets out to control from the centre all economic activity, success, of course, is unattainable. The government will then be tempted to seize new powers over the individual and, confronted still with the inevitable failures, will look for scapegoats—citizens who have not worked hard enough or have engaged in sabotage, or evil-intentioned foreigners. Some of the greatest tyrannies have had their origin in the frustrations of those who have sought to do good by methods which were doomed to failure.

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Reply to Jawaharlal Nehru

NEHRU CAME TO MADRAS with all the paraphernalia of the Prime Minister of India and attempted in his speech to answer my oft-repeated charges; he made counter-charges against me of speaking in anger and in the confusion of mind caused by unaccountable anger. I am grateful for the respect he continues to have for me. He wants me to say precisely what I want and paint the picture of India as I desire it to be. The Swatantra manifesto answers this challenge and not even adverse newspapers have found it wanting in definiteness or clarity. But as Nehru has had no time to read it, here is my picture.

I want an India clear of the atmosphere of fear in which it is now enveloped, where honest men engage in the difficult tasks of production or trade can carry on their occupation without fear of ruin at the hands of officials, ministers and party bosses.

I want an India where talent and energy can find scope for play without having to cringe and obtain special individual permission from officials and ministers, and where their efforts will be judged by the open market in India and abroad.

I want the dense permit-licence fog not to sit on us. I want Statism to go and Government reduced to its proper functions.

I want the inefficiency of public management to go where the competitive economy of private management can look after affairs.

I want the corruptions of this permit-licence raj to go.

I want the officials appointed to administer laws and policies to be free from the pressures of the bosses of the

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ruling party, and gradually restored back to the standards of fearless honesty which they once maintained.

Nehru says he has not been approached by any permit-seeker. True. But he has an army of 150 ministers under him and numerous professional Congressmen busy in this new occupation of assisting men to get quotas and permits.

I want real equal opportunities for all and no private monopolies created by the permit-licence raj.

I want an India where the peasants are not intimidated or beguiled into giving up their lands for Nehru to build castles in the air through co-operative farming.

I want security for all owners of property, land or other forms of acquisitions, without a Sword of Damocles hanging over them threatening expropriation without payment of just and full compensation as fixed by judicial authorities on correct principles and not according to the dictation of political legislation.

I want the fundamental rights to be restored to their original shape and kept intact.

I want an India where heavy direct and indirect taxes do not prevent the building-up of private capital, discouraging enterprise and effort.

I want an India where the budget of the Centre does not cause inflation and soaring prices.

I want an India where the State does not tax for capital investment, making the present generation's life miserable.

I want the money power of big business to be isolated from politics. Democracy is hard to be worked and it should not be ruined by money power and rendered into a simulacrum by expensive elections and big business supporting the ruling party with funds in return for privileges or in fear of the State's regulatory powers.

I want an India where *dharma* once again rules the hearts of men, and not greed.

I want the spirit of compassion and benevolence to have

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free play and not stifled by State schemes of monopolizing all welfare by over-taxation and over-centralization.

I want the State to know its limitations and function in humility and the citizens to realize spirituality through the traditional channels inherited by them in that regard.

I want a strong party to be in real opposition to the ruling party—whichever party it may be—so that the wheels of democracy may run on the straight road.

I want India to regain her moral stature abroad and I do not want our people to be bamboozled into thinking that we have not lost what moral authority we commanded during Gandhiji's days.

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Language issue

THE language issue may be divided into two questions. (1) What is the best medium for instruction in schools and colleges? (2) What should be the language in which official business should be done in the States, in the Central Government, in inter-State matters and between the States and the Central Government?

As to the medium of instruction, it is my longstanding conviction, and I hold to it still, that the mother tongue should be the medium of explanation and instruction in all stages of education, that is, in the primary and high school stages and in the university courses also. No one questions the appropriateness of the mother-tongue in the primary and secondary stages but it is thought by some that in the advanced courses dealt with in university education, English might be better suited. The argument advanced is that terms of art, scientific and technical terminology, cannot be invented all at once to cover the wide and increasing field of modern knowledge. I concede the difficulty. I go very far in this : I maintain that there should be no ban on the free and liberal use of English terms even while the process of inventing and familiarizing ourselves with new scientific and technical terms in Indian languages is going on, be it in Hindi or be it in any of the other tongues of India. In class-room lectures we may be using the foreign terminology while in popular, oral or written expositions, we might use in an increasing degree suitable new Indian terms. What I stress is that the use of foreign technical terms does not and should not imply that for that reason the entire lecture or instruction should be in English. A chemistry or botany class may be conducted in Hindi or Tamil or Marathi, although all the special and technical

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terms used are of Latin or Greek or English origin. This is not only possible, but is the most efficient way of imparting instruction if our aim is really to impart instruction in the subject of chemistry or botany and not to use the occasion only as an indirect means of improving our knowledge of English.

This is true for university education as much as in the earlier stages. Everyone interested in the true progress of our people wants that attention to English language and literature should not slacken in our educational schemes just because we have attained freedom from British rule. Freedom from British rule should not mean escape from English literature. It is absolutely important that we should maintain the study of English and conserve what we have achieved in that respect. English is an international medium of great value and as far as we are concerned it is the language of modern science. The knowledge of English possessed by the educated people of India is a great national asset and should not be thrown away. But the importance that we should attach to the study of English as a language subject should not be allowed in our educational schemes to eclipse the importance of other branches of knowledge. If English is adopted as the medium of instruction in all subjects, the language becomes almost the main aim of all effort and the instruction in the science or other substantial subjects dealt with will suffer in efficiency. We are likely to learn English through science rather than science through English. In order to maintain a proper standard of English knowledge it is not necessary to sacrifice the ease and clarity of understanding that we gain, if we adopt the mother tongue as medium in the teaching of science and other such subjects. We should teach and we should learn sciences and other subjects. We should also maintain a good knowledge of English. The two aims are different and should be kept apart.

We should avoid a confusion that persistently clouds this issue of medium of instruction. That English technical

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and scientific terminology should be used in teaching science or other such subjects does not mean that the entire explanation and instruction should also be couched in English and that the students should get all their knowledge only through the difficult channel of a foreign tongue. Latin terms are used in botany and other science lectures in England and Scotland and America, but the lectures themselves are in English. Similarly whatever English or Latin names and phrases we may use, we should explain things for the students in their mother tongue and this can be done without any detriment to precision or fullness of understanding. It is not to be assumed that the use of Hindi or Marathi or Bengali or Tamil to teach a science involves the laborious translation of all the special terms of that science. The scientific terms that prevail in the English-speaking world and with which the Indian teacher is so familiar may be continued just as they stand, even if the professor explains the subjects in an Indian language. Neither teacher nor student need struggle with correct English idiom and English grammatical construction in order to advance scientific knowledge.

Nor is it to be assumed that if subjects are taught through the mother tongue the students should slacken their attention to English literature. The best standards can and should be maintained both in the substantial science subjects and in the study of English literature. A lot of vague talk on either side has been heard and vehemence has taken the place of clarity in discussing this issue. Even Greek and Latin and Sanskrit as languages are taught in the English universities through English. Surely science and technology may be taught also in our own languages although we use English technical terms.

So far, English was being learnt by us not only when English as such was being taught, but also when other subjects were being dealt with. If the medium of instruction in all subjects is changed from English to the regional tongue, there is no doubt that from the point of view of

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instruction and practice in the use of the English language, we shall lose a great deal. But though one of our aims is to learn English, it should not be done at the cost of other equally important subjects of study. The loss has therefore to be made up for by extra attention bestowed on exercise in English composition (spoken and written) and on the study of English literature.

Now coming to the question of the official language, the biggest language group of the people of India is the Hindi-speaking population. This may be admitted straightway. If India is to be one people, in politics, in commerce and in arts, Hindi is the one language that must claim attention from all the people of India besides their own regional language, whatever part of the country they may be living in. Trade cannot for long remain confined within the borders of one language area. So it is impossible to confine the literary and cultural or political activities of the people within the boundaries of a linguistic area. If an Indian citizen desires to be cultured and educated in a true sense, he must be able to express himself and feel at home wherever he may be in India. A man whose ambition is to be a cultural Indian cannot enclose himself in his mono-linguistic shell. It follows that a sound knowledge of Hindi must be one of the aims of all education in all parts of India. Hindi is bound to be the national language of India. The progress of communications and commerce is certain to bring this about.

But the process can and should be accelerated by deliberate plans of education, that is, by teaching Hindi to all boys and girls in all the schools in the South. The question of what the official language of India should now be is a different thing and must be answered on the basis of facts, expediency, justice and fairplay, and not solved by a process of wishful thinking in anticipation of what education can possibly achieve in the next hundred years.

The language spoken in a State should be the language of

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official work in that State. If it is a bilingual State, both the languages there should be recognized as official languages. It should not be, it can never be, a matter of rule by majority. Official documents should be multiglot, irrespective of the relative sizes of the two or three language groups in the bilingual or trilingual State. We have on this question instructive precedents in Belgium, Finland, Switzerland, South Africa and Canada, which it would be wise for us to follow.

As for the Central Government and for inter-State communication in India, my view is that English should be the official language. Official reports and documents have to be in a language which happens to be in fact the most convenient medium for such inter-State use. There can be no doubt that, as a result of historical causes, English is the best medium for such purposes. The persons now dealing with inter-State and Central Government papers in all the States are able to handle the English language with ease and precision, more easily and with greater precision than even their own mother tongue as far as high level official work goes. The history of two hundred years which has produced this result cannot be wiped out by wishful thinking. It has nothing to do with the status of freedom.

It is not wise to throw away an asset that we have acquired on grounds of pride or prejudice. In all parts of India the people who are qualified for the public service at all significant levels have a very fair knowledge of English. In many parts of India they have not a knowledge of Hindi at all or anything like what they have of English. It would be unreasonable and amount to waste of a national asset to discard English for these purposes, on the ground that free India must change over from English to some one of the Indian languages.

Where an official document has to be issued to the public, it will of course have to be issued in the language of the people of that area, but so far as the departments are con-

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cerned, it would be absurd in the extreme to decree that inter-State or Central Government correspondence should originate and issue in Hindi in areas where Hindi is not understood or spoken. It would create confusion and be a source of annoyance and grave error. To turn out every official who has no adequate command of Hindi and employ only Hindi-knowing persons in the public services would by unfair and unjust, even if it were conceivable.

When we impose a language as the official language we have to consider many issues of justice and fairplay and expediency. We cannot shut our eyes to these considera-tions and go by mere arithmetic-majority when we directly or indirectly exercise statutory compulsion. If the people not speaking Hindi had been scattered all over, being a small minority everywhere, the position would have been different. But the fact is that in large and compact areas Hindi is not spoken, and the millions of men and women living in those areas speak other languages. The principle of overall majority would be misleading and cannot be applicable, under such circumstances, in the matter of language.

Equality of treatment and non-discrimination must find implicit acceptance as a sacred principle in democracy. In Switzerland under Article 116 of that country's Constitution, three languages, German, French and Italian, are constituted the Federal Official Languages. By Article 127 of the South African Constitution, English and Afrikaans are the official languages of the Union, and are treated on a footing of equality. Proceedings of the South African Parliament are kept in both languages and all bills, acts and notices of general public importance or interest are issued by the Government of the Union in both languages. In Finland, Swedish is spoken by only nine per cent of the population but Finnish and Swedish are both the official languages of Finland. In Canada too both English and French stand on an equal footing. So also in Belgium, Flemish and French are both given equal place.

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In applying this principle of justice and fairplay in India, we meet with the difficulty of having to accommodate more than ten main languages prevailing in various areas in the country. We cannot say, all or none. We must find a way out of the difficulty which will come as near to justice and fairplay as possible. There can be no better solution than having Hindi and English together to function as the official languages of the Union. The history of the last two hundred years will justify this solution, as based on fairplay and conducing to equal convenience for all. The wishes of the non-Hindi areas should prevail in this matter.

In any case, even if the decision be that Hindi should ultimately be imposed on all India as the medium for Union official work and inter-State affairs, logic requires that compulsory instruction in schools must precede such a bold step and it must be effectively carried out for two generations or more before we can think of such imposition. And we must be prepared to face the feelings and sentiments that any imposition of that kind must generate in the minds of the large masses of people to whom Hindi is a new language. Hesitation on the question of compulsory Hindi in schools in all areas is consistent with a policy of making Hindi the official language of the Union. The imposition of Hindi as the official language in place of English will be followed by greater bitterness of feeling than what is apprehended as a result of the introduction of compulsory Hindi in schools.

An argument is often advanced—which on the face of it would seem to be conclusive—that the official language of a country should be one that the vast majority of the people can understand, and that only in that way can the purpose of democracy be fulfilled. English is understood by only a very small percentage of the people of India whereas Hindi is understood by over 60 per cent of the total population ; so Hindi must be the language of all official work in the Republic : this is the argument of those who do not realize the feelings and do not place themselves in the position of

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the millions who do not speak Hindi and who live in the large non-Hindi States of India. If, as we take for granted, the official work of all the States composing the Union Republic is conducted in the regional languages, there will be a complete identification between the language of official work and the language of the people in every State. We should be content with this. The Central Government serves all the people of India and all the States. If it should conduct its work in Hindi—and not in English-and-Hindi as proposed herein—the people of the non-Hindi areas will not find any fulfilment of the democratic ideal on the basis of which the argument for Hindi is advanced. Where vast populations in many States do not speak Hindi or any language related to that stock, it will be seen that the argument of identity of language between government and people breaks down completely.

A law relating to language which by its effect relegates to a secondary and unequal status whole populations of many States would be a gross infraction of the fundamental law of democracy. A language may belong to one of the constituents of the population of India and it may be a majority group. But it would be undemocratic to raise it to an official position by which the other language groups would be consigned to an inferior position in actual practice. Any law or rule that tends to bring a great and continuing advantage to the people speaking a particular language and a great handicap and disadvantage to other populations, who have equal membership in the Union, is not a just law. What is not just must be scrupulously avoided. The will of the majority must prevail in democracy, but it would be a misinterpretation of democracy and amount to oppression, if democracy is interpreted to mean the *conferring of advantages* on the majority. The strength and vitality of a State would be weakened by such oppressive laws. The will of the majority should be exercised *for the equal benefit* as far as possible of all the people including the minorities.

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Did you not learn English? You can therefore learn Hindi! Little do people who utter this argument realize what it means. Do they desire the Hindi-speaking people to be looked upon as the English people were looked upon? As alien oppressors? God forbid. Let us spread, by word and action, an atmosphere of love and not a feeling that in democracy too there is tyranny inherent. Group tyranny is much more painful than individual violence.

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Multiplicity of faiths and languages

THERE is a tendency in progressive political circles, as well as among educationists, to seek to make anything that is good and useful a compulsory part of youth's educational course. I should like, on this occasion, to express my doubts in respect of this tendency. The idea that education should cover all useful fields of equipment is futile and erroneous. The limitations of time and immaturity should be kept in mind, and more time should be spent on evolving the capacity to acquire knowledge and to think aright, than on substantial equipment straightaway.

The pressure of too many subjects is not a good thing for the young brain. On the other hand, it is only when the brain is young that the capacity to think aright can be developed and correct methods of work implanted. To give an example, I would point out that history cannot be understood by boys and girls who have not seen or experienced much of life and its problems. The brain is a machine which should be properly assembled and adjusted during youth. Once this is done, it will take care of itself and plenty of time lies ahead for the acquiring of information in all branches. The stress during youth should be on training, on creating a habit of correct observation, of scientific curiosity, and of thinking aright and not on cramming the brain with information.

The aim of education is that the pupil should acquire an automatic appreciation of values, moral and other. We do not desire to produce indoctrinated minds. That is not the democratic ideal. Totalitarians may wish to give a twist in a planned direction while the mind is young,

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but our aim should be to produce a free and faithful intellectual and moral apparatus, rather than to give pre-arranged twists.

Again, it should be remembered that that which is compulsory automatically induces distaste. If you wish boys and girls to develop a permanent and unreasoning dislike of anything, make that subject compulsory. If you wish that they may develop a willingness and a capacity to appreciate good literature such as the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, or Shakespeare, or the Bible, for God's sake, I would say to the educationists, do not make the study of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* or of Shakespeare or the Bible, compulsory in the school. The lessons of both child psychology and human psychology are that mandatory and compulsory direction produces a contrary and rebellious tendency. The conditions for assimilation should be produced, and there should be no compulsion. Youth should be helped to choose good things for itself rather than be forced and drilled.

Therefore, I would suggest to educationists that less stress should be laid on examinations and more on opportunities for study and assimilation. The examination is the most bitter part of compulsion. It creates an incurable tendency towards superficiality and a paradoxical condition wherein a certain degree of equipment and dislike go together. Once the examination is over it leaves in the successful candidate a distaste for further advance.

If the standard of attainment is better in any field in foreign universities than in India, it is not due to stiffer examinations or to superior talents. It is the result of a greater voluntary exertion on the part of teachers and pupils born of a love of the thing itself and better facilities for study and research, rather than of any stricter or better system of examinations and rejections. It is the result of a condition of things in which aptitude and love of subject, rather than irrelevant ambitions and prospects of career and employment, guide the students in their choice of studies.

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There are two problems which are the cause of great worry to our educationists, that of religious and moral instruction in a land of many faiths and that arising out of a multiplicity of languages. Taking the education of children, we see that they should be trained to love one another, to be kindly and helpful to all, to be tender to the lower animals and to observe and think aright. The task of teaching them how to read and write and to count and calculate is important, but it should not make us lose sight of the primary aim of moulding personality in the right way. For this it is necessary to call to our aid, culture, tradition and religion.

But in our country we have, in one and the same school, to look after boys and girls born in different faiths and who belong to families that live diverse ways of life and follow forms of worship associated with different religious denominations. It will not do to follow the easy path of evading the challenge by attending solely to physical culture and intellectual education. We have to evolve a suitable technique and method which will serve the spiritual needs of children through many religions in the same school. We would thereby cultivate an atmosphere of mutual respect and a fuller understanding and a more helpful co-operation among all the different communities in our society.

India is not like other smaller countries where there is a single language and a single faith. We have a multiplicity of languages and faiths, but are yet one and must remain one people. We have, therefore, to give basic training in our schools for the speaking and understanding of many languages and for the understanding and respect for the different religions prevailing in India. It is not right for us in India to be dissuaded from this on account of considerations as to the over-taxing of the young mind. What is necessary must be done. And it is not in fact too great a burden.

Any attempt to do away with or to steam-roll the differences through governmental coercion and indirect pressure, would be as futile as it would be unwise. Any imposition

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of a single way of life and form of worship on all children, or the neglect of a section of the pupils in the respect, or a barren secularisation, will lead to a harmful conflict between the school and home life of the people concerned. On the other hand, if we give due recognition to the various faiths prevailing in our educational institutions and organise suitable facilities for boys and girls of all faiths, it may itself serve as a broadening influence of great national value.

In regions where more than one language is spoken I see no other way but one, namely, to form sections in the mixed schools according to language. For certain purposes they may sit together, so that the advantages of both mixing and separate attention may be retained. In this way, provided we solve the problems with understanding and patience, the very difficulties which we at first deplore may prove in the end to be of the greatest value for progress and what was pain and trouble may become a source of enlightenment and joy.

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Wanted a movement

A STRONG government and a loyal people no doubt make a good State. But a deaf government and a dumb people do not make democracy. Democracy is not just a statutory entity. A knitting together of people's hearts makes democracy, the hearts being not of sheep but of men.

I have had forty years of contact with the saint who came to show a new way of life and an altogether new way of resistance against evil. The sieve of time has of course dropped many impressions and many details but what remains has by that process become all the clearer and firmer :

That happiness, either of the individual or of the body of thinking and feeling men and women called the nation, depends on character, not on material possessions or on the prospects of getting them later on.

Again, that reform must always come from within ; and that loyal devotion to God is the spring of all reform from within and compulsion or violence, of any sort, makes no reform.

The problem of national happiness consists in nothing so much as in a change of heart. That should be our real ten-year plan. It does not need any annual confirmation by parliamentary vote at budget time. It calls for a nation-wide movement, for it is based on something more than a majority vote, the nature of man, something permanent.

Happiness does not depend on competition either among ourselves or with other nations. We cannot 'catch up' when we are behind other nations by centuries. Indeed why should we 'catch up' if our aim is not show but welfare and happiness ? And if catching up depends on external

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aid, it is a temptation and a trap ; we shall be entangled in a voluntary moral subjection worse than military occupation.

We have to conserve what we possess of virtues. We must keep off new attractions that do not add to, but undermine old virtues. The inner urges and the unquestioned religious convictions which form the framework of action are far from important and effective than laws and regulations which the State may seek to impose. Nothing should be done to sabotage those urges and those convictions that have issued out of age-long co-operation and experience and the climate of a particular national life. As in art, so also in government, the artist or the ruler must fully feel and put himself in harmony with one's land and people. Then only can good results be achieved.

To day our rulers have strayed away from this axiom. They feel as if they belong to a higher race and have a mission to impose their convictions on the people. Their language is far too reminiscent of foreign autocracy. The musicians of India are even now in perfect tune with the land of their birth and its people. So the music of the musicians continues to give joy. In contrast with this, the disharmony of the Government is striking. The activities of the Government being in disharmony have brought into being a sense of uncertainty and insecurity and have destroyed initiative. They have created disincentives for work and thought, which alone add to national wealth. Men and women have come to look upon the State as they look upon the stars and planets whose decrees of fate decide and which they cannot hope to change.

Two things are essential, a movement to make all people work hard whatever their place or their job, and a movement to make the rich feel they are trustees of what they hold beyond what they need for themselves. These can be sought to be brought about by extreme compulsion, but by far the most efficient way is by a movement for voluntary acceptance of these essential and right conditions for progress and happiness. They are in the tradition of

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our people. They will preserve the graces of life and spread joy both spiritual and material.

Whatever the nature or the system of government may be, the two essentials—work and compassion—make for prosperity and true happiness. A BBC Panorama recently broadcast a lot of important facts about China. Human labour can hardly ever have been employed since the days of the Pyramids with such insect-like profusion as in modern China. 'Forty-five thousand Chinese, men and women, toil from sunrise to sunset on the building of a new dam, and they do it all without any kind of earth-moving machinery or equipment—in fact practically with bare hands', said Richard Dimbleby in this BBC programme. 'Men and women are working like this all over China', said Gerald Clark, London editor of the *Montreal Star*, in confirmation of Dimbleby's statement.

'The same methods of mass, unskilled labour that are putting up these huge twentieth-century earthworks are being employed also in other aspects of the drive for more industrial power', added Dimbleby.

What are *we* doing? We thirst and hunger for foreign exchange to import machinery and run family planning propaganda, and distribute contraceptives among girls who mix with ardent boys. Manual labour, the tortoise, wins the race in China against the hare, foreign machinery, in India.

'The backyard blast furnace is really the symbol of modern China. It is her industrial revolution, the great leap forward into the twentieth century', said Gerald Clark.

We in India are planning to invest astronomical figures of rupees in the founding of an atomic power station.

'The Chinese communist philosophy is "Don't wait for the big factories, use your millions, let industrialization rise in the cottage and the village workshop",' said Dimbleby in this BBC Panorama. 'There are from 3 to 7 lakh backyard furnaces throughout China,' confirmed Gerald Clark.

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'Thirty years ago it was Japan that sold cheap consumer goods to the world. Now China is competing with much lower prices, in the markets of South-East Asia,' said Richard Harris of the editorial staff of the London *Times*.

We are constantly and irrelevantly reminded that we are in the atomic age. What has the atom got to do with our progress? Nothing. Our large population of two-handed human beings is relevant and that is either ignored or deemed to be a handicap. In China they use these hands.

May be, it is there done by compulsion and indoctrination. But that is not an essential. Our men *can* and must be made work-minded. Our rulers must be liberated from the machine obsession. If together with this we have the doctrine of trusteeship, that is, of compassion and a sense of reality, we can solve the antinomy of individual and society. We can make a paradise of free men in India.

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Birth control

I HAVE been long avoiding a subject considered very important by a section of our politicians, statisticians and intellectuals—control of population, and contraception gadgets, vasectomy and sterilisation plans associated with that subject. The new contraceptive device, the 'loop', and the reports about its popularity have alarmed me and served to overcome my disgust, and I shall say what I feel on the subject. Many, perhaps most, of the Swatantra Party leaders and supporters may not agree with my view on population control and use of contraceptives, and the quackeries and sales-interests building up around them. The views expressed by me are mine and without prejudice to the Swatantra Party and its policies. Birth control through contraceptives may be treated by the Swatantra Party as falling in the field of individual opinion and freedom, if only out of respect for the Father of the Nation.

I hold firmly the view that only prosperity can bring about the results the mathematicians want and not contraceptives or surgery made popular among people in the upper strata of society. It is not the reverse proposition that should guide us, viz., that prosperity can be brought about by contraceptives. As a result of popularizing birth-control devices, there will be some more money in the upper levels to buy scarce commodities, and prices may be slightly affected in the direction we do not desire. What we should aim at is production and consequent general prosperity. Reduction in the size of the family will follow without the need for 'loops' or surgery.

Until China learns to contain herself, she is a menace to the peace-loving nations of Asia who do not agree to be absorbed or held under her hegemony. This is the real and

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immediate problem for India, not her population. The comfort-loving, selfish and non-adventurous sections of the population will take advantage of contraceptives which the Government may provide and live easier lives, but it will not affect the population problem of the nation. A rise in general prosperity alone can affect it. Individual comfort or standard of living to be improved by reducing the population denominator are as futile an effort to solve the mass problem as they are illogical in the context of the Chinese menace. As long as this menace is there, we want a large-army—not an efficient military force on good Western models, but a very large body of trained citizens ready to die and willing to live a hard and hazardous life, rifle in hand, knowing how to protect themselves and to get rid of guerrilla enemies wherever causing mischief. The people of Communist China are ready and willing to offer up their lives, because life as a soldier is better than life as a citizen. If we adopt birth-control by means of contraceptives and sterilization we shall have an *elite* of selfish, comfort-loving men and women, as fond of life as leeches of blood, and never prepared for sacrifice or the risks of any kind of war. This is not the leadership we want in India, now or in the near future, until we have world security for peace in Asia.

The mass of the population cannot develop an ideology contrary to what the *elite* exhibit and set as an example. An *elite* indulging in sterile sexual acts, and keeping themselves free from the troubles and worries of children, is not the *elite* that will inspire the poor to join the army and die for the country. Not only are the plans for contraception inherently disgusting, like masturbation, sodomy, etc., but, in the circumstances we are placed in, wholly unwise. The queues reported gleefully by the press as standing for the 'loop' in Kerala are an alarming symptom, not a piece of good news as the 'family planners' may interpret it. It is very good news for China who wants this nation to be enervated in addition to economic difficulties and disintegrating polices persistently followed by the ruling party,

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as if it were a conquering invader occupying the seat of power dividing the people in order to rule them the more easily. Communist China has a potential body in India of ready-made infiltrators posing as a political party and encouraging and voting with the Congress Party in all the measures that will lead to disintegration and discontent, all the time pretending to be an opposition party. The ambition of China is an accepted fact and the need for a big, even if ill-paid and ill-equipped, army must also be taken as an unavoidable necessity for saving the country from lapsing into the condition of South-East Asia. This, if granted, means that birth-control preceding prosperity is an erroneous obsession and an inexpedient policy.

And is there not some truth in what Gandhiji felt and explicitly expressed, that this attempt at birth control without self-control is immoral, unnatural and harmful to body as well as mind—particularly the latter?

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Prohibition

Is NOT moral persuasion better than legal prohibition of the liquor traffic?

The place of moral persuasion in temperance reform is large and important. But persuasion is to be brought to bear upon individuals in order to secure personal abstinence. It has no relevance in dealing with a social and economic problem which the liquor traffic constitutes. We have no right to place continual temptations before weak people. Prohibition by legal enactment is the only way to stop the liquor traffic. Educative propaganda and prohibition of the traffic should go on side by side, each helping the other.

Ramsay Macdonald said: 'They tell us that we cannot make men sober by act of Parliament. I hate these little snug petty-fogging and inaccurate pieces of proverbial philosophy. They are thrown off by men who cannot think, and they are believed in by fools. The conclusion of experience throughout the world is absolutely inevitable and irresistible, that you can make men and women sober by act of Parliament.'

Is it right to interfere with the personal liberty of people?

A man's right to drink what he pleases is subject to his family's right to a fair share in his income.

Liberty is not unrestricted licence to act according to one's own will. Liberty must be regulated by law. The State has a right to determine what trade shall be permitted and what shall not be permitted as being prejudicial to the public good.

Freedom does not consist in allowing people to alienate their own freedom. This is just what the right to drink degenerates into.

Every civilised man, like the bee, must be subject to the

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law of the hive. Lord Bryce in his book on *Modern Democracies* says : 'The principle of protecting a man against his own propensities when these are injurious to the community is deemed legitimate.'

Again, even the present licence laws are a violation of personal liberty.

The whole fabric of the Criminal Law is based upon the principle of prohibition and interference with personal liberty.

If we are to have government and order, laws must be based on the principle of the greatest good to the greatest number. The law has just as much right to prevent the drink traffic from placing pit-falls before weak people and to make me a teetotaller against my will, as it has to make me send my children to school or to keep to the left on the public highway.

St. Paul said (Romans XIV, 21) : 'It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.'

'The liquor trade has become a menace to the public life of the country and it corrupts politics,' said Ramsay Macdonald.

Prof. Scharffenburg has stated that alcohol and other narcotic drugs are the most dangerous enemies of personal liberty.

The following plea is often urged :

Alcoholic beverages may not give real strength or nourishment ; but it is not right to deprive half-starved miserable people of some comfort and happiness, false though it may be. We do nothing to help them to get a square meal. Why should we deprive them of even the temporary relief obtained from toddy ?

We should help them towards getting a square meal and feeding their women and children, by shutting up the toddy and arrack shops. The money that a workman pays for his drink is generally more than the cost of a good meal for him and often quite enough for a good meal for the whole

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family. The best and immediate service, we can do for these miserable people is to save this waste by removing the temptations. The comfort they derive from drink kills their souls, and prevents effort and emancipation.

Is not toddy a nourishing drink?

Three pies worth of coconut contains more nourishment than six annas worth of toddy. Even this three pies worth of nourishment is prevented from doing good by the alcohol that is mixed up with it.

Is it not oppressive for the high class educated citizens to deprive the poor and depressed classes of their only joy?

The most urgent reason for prohibition is the good of these depressed classes. No other single measure of reform can help these people, and at once raise them economically and socially, as total prohibition can. The rich and the educated may be indifferent about this reform. It is most necessary for saving the poor and the lowly.

Scientific investigation has exploded the old belief in the value of alcoholic drink to the manual worker. Dr. Schaffenburg: 'Moderate drinking reduces the workers' efficiency. The notion that moderate drinking helps an artisan in his daily work is false."

Dr. H. H. Dale, Secretary of the Royal Society and Director of the Institute of Medical Research, gave his conclusion before the Royal Commission: 'Alcohol is not an aid to efficient work, but always as hindrance." The Board of Education syllabus says that muscular fatigue following severe exertion is more readily recovered from, if the man has not taken alcohol.

Do we not lose good revenue by giving up the tax on drinks and drugs?

Revenue from drink is no revenue in any real sense. It is a small saving from waste which, if the Government be wise, it should prevent altogether. Total prohibition will save for the homes five times what is now paid into the Government treasury. Add also what will be saved in the

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expenditure for prevention and punishment of crimes. It is worthwhile to lose the drink revenue.

How shall be substitute the revenue that is now got from drinks and drugs?

Mahatma Gandhi has said times without number that there is a huge military expenditure, so much of which is based upon distrust of the nation. It is capable of reduction by more than Rs. 25 crores.

If need be, we may impose fresh taxes on ourselves to the necessary extent, rather than permit a trade that is so great an enemy to society. But the objection ill becomes an administration, whose cost is scandalously out of proportion to the income of the people governed.

The liquor interests, including governments, present the following dilemma to prohibition:

If a country consumes relatively little alcohol per head of population, the people are temperate and there is no need for prohibition laws.

If a country consumes relatively much *per capita*, then that is not the place for prohibition laws; for, the people will never agree to give up drink.

There is too much drinking in the West, prohibition is impracticable there. There is too little drinking in India, and therefore prohibition is unnecessary here.

We should not, however, be confused by dilemmas of this kind. If the prevailing sentiment in respect of drink and drugs is the test for deciding whether India is ready for total prohibition, we are better ready today than America was in 1919, or Great Britain is today.

The annual consumption of liquor in Bengal, for instance is 3/4 gallon of absolute alcohol per hundred of population. In England and Wales, it is 117 gallons. The abstinence of Bengal compared to England is in the proportion of 156 to 1.

The usual objections raised to a prohibition policy in Britain are:

1. The woeful ignorance of the masses of the people with regard to the fundamental aspect of the drink problem.

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Thanks to religion and tradition, this objection does not apply to India.

2. The drinking habit is so interwoven into the social and national life of the people that the time is not ripe for drastic legislative action.

This does not apply to India.

3. The drink trade has too much of a hold on municipal and national politics and on the press of the country to make immediate prohibition successful.

This does not now apply to India, but may if we delay.

Is public opinion in favour of total prohibition in India ? No one who is in touch with public feeling in India in regard to the drink and drug traffic can have any doubts on this point.

Gokhale in a deputation to the Secretary of State for India in 1912 solemnly declared : ' Total prohibition is really in keeping with the sentiment of the Indian people.'

On 21st January 1925, a memorial signed by over 30,000 women of India was submitted to the Viceroy to introduce total prohibition. On 2nd September 1925, by a majority of votes representing the solid, undivided force of non-official opinion, the Legislative Assembly adopted the following resolution :

' This Assembly recommends to the Governor-General-in Council that he be pleased to accept as the ultimate policy of Government the prohibition of the production, manufacture, sale and import of intoxicating liquors, save for medical and scientific purposes. It further recommends that as the first step in carrying out this policy the provincial governments be directed immediately to inaugurate the policy of investing the power of fixing by a system of local option the location and number of shops selling intoxicating liquors in either local self-governing bodies or licensing boards specially constituted for the purpose, and to undertake necessary legislation in furtherance of that policy.'

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On 9th January 1927, Ramdass Pantulu moved in the Council of State the following resolution :

'This Council recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that a policy of prohibition of the use of alcoholic liquors should be adopted in the local administrations under the direct control of the Government of India.'

The Finance Secretary to Government of India could not deliver a frontal attack but moved an amendment as follows :

'This Council recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that a policy designed to promote and ensure moderation in the use of alcoholic liquors should be adopted in the local administrations under the direct control of the Government of India.'

It is needless to say that the Government of India have done nothing to ' promote and ensure moderation."

The Legislative Councils of Bombay, United Provinces, Madras and other provinces have adopted resolutions in favour of total prohibition.

In December 1928, the All Parties Convention that sat in Calcutta for considering a draft Swaraj Constitution for India, adopted the following clause as part of the draft constitution in that chapter dealing with Fundamental Rights :

' It shall be the duty of the Commonwealth to save its citizens from the evil and temptations of alcoholic liquor and intoxicating drugs, and it shall as soon as possible after the establishment of the Commonwealth Government make laws for the total prohibition of the manufacture, import, possession or sale of alcoholic liquor and intoxicating drugs except for medicinal or industrial purposes.'

Again, the Indian National Congress has finally adopted the following clause in its Bill of Rights :

'The Congress declares that any constitution which

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may be agreed to on its behalf should provide or enable the Swaraj Government to provide for the following :

Clause 13 : Intoxicating drinks and drugs shall be totally prohibited except for medicinal purposes.'

If Indian opinion is so strong and so clear on the subject it may be asked why there should be any difficulty in realising the object, seeing that Excise is a ' transferred ' Provincial subject, fully within the control of Ministers responsible to the legislature. It must be remembered that the authority of the Central Government is reserved over the customs duties on imported liquors. But the true answer lies in the fact that the power transferred to the Provincial Legislatures and Ministers is unreal. Without excise revenue the Provincial ' transferred ' administration would be starved out of existence. The central and reserved subject and the non-votable items in the budgets leave no power to the Ministers for any measure of liquor prohibition. If they do not openly go over to the opposite side, they can only equivocate or procrastinate, and promise without intending to perform.

Is it not better to introduce reform gradually instead of attempting total prohibition immediately ?

Vicious habits are bound to spread and take deeper root with each succeeding year of delay. Reform becomes more and more difficult as we allow time to lapse.

Is it not necessary to give time so as to adjust the Government budget to the loss of revenue from drink ?

Revenue complications will be all the harder for solution if we allow time to pass. Some thirty years ago, a major province in India received a crore of rupees only from this traffic. Today it is anything between 5 crores and 6 crores. It forms a fourth of the total income under principal heads of revenue in the Punjab, and Central Provinces and Bengal. It is third in Bombay, more than a third in Madras, and nearly a half in Bihar.

Expenditure in all Government departments has always a tendency to increase. No future time will be more

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favourable from the point of view of finance than the present.

What is the objection to reducing the evil by gradually reducing the number of shops?

There is no real connection between the gradual reduction of the total number of shops and the habits of the victims. The victims do not reduce their indulgence in proportion to the total number of shops. There were 90,000 liquor shops in India in 1904. They have been gradually reduced to 45,000. The reduction has been so gradual that it may be said that the customers were gradually trained to walk the distance. The number of shops was reduced by half but excise revenue quadrupled.

The Government reduction of number of shops is only a consolidation of business, like abolition of small holdings and making up large estates. Moreover, the large renter knows how to keep unlicensed branches, wherever he finds sufficient business for them.

The reduction of shops, as done by Government does not mean that any area is left dry. A shop here and a shop there are removed so that the custom in the shops left over in that area, and the Government revenue therefrom, are proportionately increased.

Will not prohibition enforcement be a very costly affair? Even without prohibition we have to incur expenditure for regulating the trade and preventing breaches of the government monopoly. The present excise administrations each cost from Rs. 20 lakhs in smaller provinces to rupees half a crore in the bigger ones. Every detail of licit and illicit production and distribution has even now to be watched.

Assuming that the task of enforcing total prohibition must be difficult or costly, it is a price that must be paid at the outset on account of past follies of allowing the drink trade to develop to such proportions.

Phillip Snowden, chancellor of the exchequer said: 'If we could abolish the liquor traffic, I should view the

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prospect with the most complete complacency. The direct and indirect cost of the maintenance of the liquor traffic does not produce wealth. The more people are employed in that trade, the greater is the drain upon the national resources and upon every productive industry in the country.'

Will there not be a large amount of illicit manufacture under total prohibition? Illicit manufacture and sale are now going on even under the licence system. It is not reasonable to demand cent per cent success in the enforcement of prohibition, when you are satisfied with less in the enforcement of the licence system. In fairness we should give a chance to the system of total prohibition, as good and as long as the licensing system has had.

Thousands of people drink only because it is available in licensed places. It is only some that will commit crimes and risk punishment. If there are no licensed places many thousands will be saved.

Because the licensing system has created a large number of habitual addicts, there will be difficulty in preventing illicit indulgence for some time. But it does not lie in the mouth of the supporters of the license system to raise an objection for which they themselves are responsible.

Will there not be smuggling?

Smuggling is not confined to alcohol and drugs. There is a considerable amount of smuggling of very machine on which there is a high duty.

Are not brandy, opium etc., necessary for medicinal purposes?

Total prohibition does not mean that qualified doctors will not be permitted to use alcohol, opium and other drugs in such forms and in such quantities as they may find desirable in particular cases.

Would you like coffee, tea, or lemonade prohibited?

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If coffee, tea or lemonade created as much misery and crime, and injured health, as intoxicating drinks do, we should agree to such drinks being prohibited. No one has ever heard of a man beating his wife, or stealing or murdering under the influence of coffee or lemonade.

Have not picketing and stringent caste regulations increased illicit traffic and secret drinking?

To some extent: (1) Because Government has facilitated the formation of the drink habit in so many people, it has made remedial effort very difficult. (2) Because Government keeps up the licensed dealer and he seeks to carry on his business anyhow. (3) Because Government has a soft corner for the licensed dealer and is lenient as regards breach of regulations on his part.

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World around

The three essays in this group show Rajaji's grasp of the major issues in modern international politics. Nuclear terror is a menace of incalculable scope and the two super-powers have it in their hands to destroy civilization and all mankind in their fanatic pursuit of world hegemony. The third essay deals with an aspect of world government and is built around the personality and intimate reflections of a Secretary-General of the United Nations, who regarded himself as a servant of a emerging world government, Dag Hammarskjold.

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Nightmare of nuclear arms

THE subject of the evening is 'Mankind's self-made precipice'. I have borrowed this apt phrase from *The Times* of London.

It pains me very much that the Western powers are going wrong in what they are doing and that it has fallen to my lot to be pointing it out in unequivocal terms. I would have felt far happier perhaps if it had been the other way about and I had to point out only the faults of another party. I have said at another meeting how greatly we are bounden to America and I need not repeat the reason here. It is, however, good that I repeat my hope that what I say should be interpreted as the anxious thoughts of a friend and not as carping criticism from one who is not concerned in the welfare of America or the other Western powers.

So much has recently appeared in the daily press about nuclear weapons that everyone now knows quite a deal about them. It is possible to know a lot in a vague way and yet not have it all in order in the mind so as to be able to come to reasoned conclusions. The papers daily bring fresh news of what is done and said about these nuclear weapons. We may thus by verbal familiarity and repetition even lose the sense of danger about them. This is the reason why I am before you to attempt to explain the points involved.

Much has been said in defence of science in general, as if science stood accused, and we were in need of being told about the advantage of scientific knowledge and progress. I am completely in favour of the search of truth that is called science, lead it where it may. I do not for a moment support State or Church control over knowledge. It is

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impossible and undesirable to put restraints on the search for truth; but it is desirable and possible to put restraints on the application of what we unravel out of the mysteries of Nature. If we control our *application* of knowledge there is no danger in knowledge itself. The responsibility is on those who rule the affairs of men not to misuse science or employ men of science for wicked purposes.

There is a spate of written and spoken matter about the constructive uses to which atomic knowledge can be put. Most of this comes from Governments and Government agencies, not scientists or industrialists. The industrial use of atomic energy is not likely to spring out of Government hand-outs. It is all totally irrelevant for my plea which is that we should prohibit the production and the use of nuclear weapons and that we should stop the test explosions that are carried out, which contaminate the atmosphere and waters of the world and endanger present life and the normality of the human species for future generations. I can see no relevance in these political tributes to atomic energy unless the Governments that want to keep nuclear weapons going want to confuse the public mind.

Who hates or disrespects science? Who disbelieves in the power of knowledge as capable of being used for good purposes? How does the possibility of using atomic energy for good objects justify the present use of nuclear weapons for indiscriminate mass destruction and injury to future generations with all the incidents of cowardly assassination? Everything in the world can be put both to good and bad use and atomic energy is not an exception. The good use need not be called up to confuse a calm examination of the bad uses or the prohibition thereof. If it is proposed to poison the wells of enemy countries and some people object to such methods of warfare, is it relevant to talk of the excellent medical uses to which arsenic can be put? It is not contended or proposed or possible that we shall speedily use up all the nuclear material availa-

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ble so as to starve out the military requirments. On the contrary it is proposed to use mostly the waste by-products of the regular military use of such material.

It was my good fortune to study physics in my college when nuclear physics began its career. I was in college in the closing years of the nineteenth century when the X-rays were discovered and made known to the world. Thereafter began the great work of Rutherford, the Curies, Becquerel and others. My professor at college was an able Scot whose talent for demonstrating the wonders of science endeared him to all of us. He was a fine teacher who believed not in dictating notes to help us pass our examinations but arranged and showed exciting beautiful demonstrations throughout the year and kept us entranced in the wonderland of optics and electricity. And when the X-rays came he showed us the new wonders and lost no time in making us see through opaque wooden boxes and to project the bones of our hands on the fluorescent screen. All this and more I saw in college and my professor explained the causes and the theories behind them. We saw the glow in the cathode tubes in all those wonderful phenomena of the moving particles of electrified matter. Those borderland days when old theories of science were put to severe trials were truly great days. Soon came thereafter the break-up of the whole atomic theory and I knew enough when I left college to follow what was going on in the world of science which brought matter and energy together into one equation. I am not a hater of science or its wonders. But I wish to warn those who examine the issues of disarmament and of prohibition of anti-civilization weapons of the irrelevance of all the talk of the blessings of the atom. One should love science but we should hate the making of nuclear weapons for cowardly mass destruction leading to the annihilation of the civilization that man has achieved.

Disarmament does not mean the shutting-up of science. The prohibition of nuclear weapons for purposes of war

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does not mean the closing up of laboratories or of research in the field of fundamental or applied science for the good of mankind. On the contrary, the prohibition of nuclear weapons for war would mean the release of the monopoly of Governments and the abolition of secrecy which comes into operation to prevent the spread of knowledge when anything is held for war purposes. The present military use of atomic science in fact blocks the free exchange of knowledge which is necessary for the progress of science and its beneficent application. What I plead for is the emancipation of science from the trammels of war.

When in fear and trouble men's brains, like those of other animals, are sharpened. It is true that war and its fears and hatred quicken the brains of the men of science engaged by Governments. War is said to be the mother of inventions. What a mother ! Let us not fall in love with war because for war purposes some clever things are discovered. Secrecy goes with the work of science in war and secrecy impedes science. It is reported that a very eminent Cambridge scientist who desired to go to America was refused permission. I read that a broadcast proposed by an eminent scientist in America was recently prohibited and he had to talk only what had already been widely known. I believe that the most valuable report of an important commission was delayed by order of the American Government and published only when the policy of Government demanded it later. All these are illustrative. Dr. James B. Conant, an American who served in the Department of War, has made the matter perfectly clear.

Before going to the question of the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the issue of disarmament which has been mixed up with it, I should like to point out, indeed I should like to emphasise, that the most urgent matter is the immediate prohibition by international authority of the test explosions which are going on in spite of every protest. It will not do to suppress only the bang, as Churchill said. What is demanded is to stop either loud or silent radio-

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active poisoning of the world atmosphere and of the clouds that pour the rain for man and beast and plants. The world has some rights in spite of the fears of one great power of aggression by another and their mutual dislikes. It is truly scandalous that these tests could be going on when eminent men of science, one after another, have pointed out the grave danger to world health and to future generations in the clearest possible language that men of science can command. I cannot believe that any civilized nation could ignore the evidence that has been adduced and which is accumulating everyday. The *News Chronicle* (March, 24), writing on the effects of nuclear radiation, says: 'Professor Rotblat, an experienced and responsible nuclear scientist, says in an article in the *Atomic Scientists' Journal* published this morning that it is imperative the data on the dose of radiation we have all received from nuclear tests up to date, and the rate at which this dose is increasing shall be known to the Government and published.'

Would 75 H-bomb tests over the next 30 years bring everyone in the world to the point where many children might be born mentally or physically deformed for generations to come? Professor Rotblat thinks it may be so. The Federation of American Scientists is similarly alarmed over possible genetic disasters of the future. But on both sides of the Atlantic the Governments utter soothing and reassuring statements. No Government can decently claim the benefit of the doubt in such a case in its own favour as defence lawyers do in criminal cases. Where danger to humanity is apprehended by men of science, the thing should *not* be done.

It was reported that an attempt was made on behalf of India at the recent Commonwealth Conference of Premiers to get an international agreement at once that all these test explosions should be stopped, but the attempt did not go through. Surely when the West has enough and more of these nuclear weapons further production and test explosions may well be stopped at once. I am aware that the

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strategy of nuclear weapons requires a lot more of testing Indeed I would grant that testing in the actual battle-field will soon become necessary as no amount of parade drill is equivalent to battle practice! Tests may be necessary even to reduce the intensity or the area of destruction so as to conventionalise the new weapons. Whatever be the motive or necessity, the cold war Powers have no right to disregard the rights of the world to continue in good health and in the prospect of successive uncontaminated generations of men and women being born.

There are people in the world with a conscience that is troubled. There are others who do not suffer at all this way. The bombing of Japan at the close of the last world war is troubling the conscience of America. The point is irrelevant for the present issues. Indeed all matters relating to past history, where men and rulers have committed mistakes are irrelevant, when we propose to do something to correct all those errors and to avoid future calamities. All the same, America is proud of her ideals, past and present, and anything that goes to the detriment of her moral position has a tendency to cause pain. Let me dwell on it for a moment. There is no question about the fact that the use of the atom bomb over Japan followed closely upon a successful test in a desert and that two bombs were burst one after another with only a very short interval, August 6 and August 9 of 1945. About the advisability of this atomic bombing there was just an exchange of information in an informal way between the President of America and Churchill. Stalin was kept uninformed till the last moment. It was felt that something should be mentioned to Stalin. This was perhaps done but nothing was conveyed beyond a vague and ununderstandable hint. One could understand this because the American Government then was not sure whether such valuable, secret and dangerous progress in military science could safely be conveyed to Russia even though at the moment she happened to be an honoured ally.

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It does not matter, however, whether it was the entire responsibility of America or it was shared by others. The moral issue is not altered on that account. So far as we are concerned, if it was wrong, it was wrong whether it was done by one or more than one or by all of them. The crime of Japan was that she was on the wrong side during this war. A further crime in the opinion of the West was that although Germany had been completely crushed by that time, Japan's courage could not be overwhelmed by defeat and that some groups among the Japanese nation were prepared for mass suicide rather than for unconditional surrender. This was called fanaticism and so any new monstrous weapon could be permitted by Christian morality. More American lives could not be sacrificed to meet this fanaticism although all powers had been knocked out of Japan by that time. It is best I refer to Churchill's narrative and as far as possible in his own words.

'A more intricate question was what to tell Stalin. The President and I no longer felt that we needed his aid to conquer Japan. A devastating attack on Japan had continued from the air and sea. Among the principal targets were the remnants of the Japanese fleet now dispersed for shelter in the inland sea. One by one big ships were picked out and by the end of July the Japanese navy had completely ceased to exist. The homeland of Japan was in chaos and on the verge of collapse. The professional diplomats of Japan were convinced that only immediate surrender under the authority of the Emperor could save Japan from complete annihilation. The only point the Japanese were particular about was the saving of the Emperor's honour. This was known to the allies. A message had been sent by the Emperor to Stalin. It had not been addressed probably because it was not clear to the Japanese then to whom the Emperor's letter should properly be addressed; but Stalin knew what it contained and it had been delivered by the Japanese Ambassador. It was meant either for Stalin or the President of the U.S.S.R. It stated that

Japan could not agree to what was then called "unconditional surrender", which included the handing over of the Emperor as a war criminal but Japan was prepared for admission of defeat and cessation of war. It was decided by the allied authorities not to recognise this appeal and to give an ultimatum calling for an immediate "unconditional surrender". This was published on July 26th. By that time terrific air bombing of cities had already become familiar to the world and leaflet-throwing was also a familiar process. A large number of leaflets were thus thrown over Japan warning her not of the atom bomb but of destruction by bombing. In fact, as I have already stated, even Stalin was very imperfectly informed and deliberately kept out of any-information beyond this that a novel weapon had been got ready and tried and would be used. He was not told about radio-active or atom action. The two bombs were thrown on August 6th and August 9th. We know the rest.'

'It would be a mistake to suppose,' writes Churchill, 'that the fate of Japan was settled by the atomic bomb. Her defeat was certain before the first bomb fell and was brought about by overwhelming maritime power. Her metropolitan army had capitulated without striking a blow. Her shipping had been destroyed'

Now Churchill is not a negligible authority. These are the circumstances under which I believe one is entitled to say that there was no real necessity to use the atom bombs and the unnecessary use was due to either of two causes. (1), that although Japan was crushed completely it was intended to save wasteful sacrifice of American lives in street and house to house fighting, before she could be reduced to complete possession and, therefore, the new weapon and its horrors had to be exhibited, or (2), the irrepressible urge of science to demonstrate itself when the ground for the demonstration was all clear. My own view is that the second cause prevailed and that the political authorities of America were induced to accept the decision

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to use the bomb by reason of this urge operating on those who were working on military science. Those who have lived and worked for science and research in the mechanical arts can understand the intensity of the urge to which I refer. Progress in science is based on the natural force called curiosity. There is an equal and obverse force operating in science, the hunger for demonstration of what has been discovered. But again I wish to remind you that this is irrelevant for the present discussion of policy. One who believes in the Law of Karma may well attribute the present tension and the pain and anxiety now suffered by all the victorious allies to the moral consequence of crimes committed by the triumphant allies. Triumphs lead to delusion and error. As a result of that American use of the atom and following it, science has progressed ; but equally rapidly has the Law of Karma pursued those who triumphed. Little consolation it is for those who do not believe in the Law of Karma to be told all this and perhaps it may even hurt.

Leaving the Law of Karma aside, the use of the Bomb had an immediate effect on Russia, between whom and the other two victorious allies there had already begun fear and suspicion as to the future. Is it a matter for surprise that the automatic result was a quickening of Russian scientific research to meet the newly demonstrated power of America? And we have what we now have. We need not give the name of Karma to this. But it is in accordance with the permanent pattern of human affairs.

My earnest plea that the nuclear weapons should be done away with can be justified entirely on reasons of pure military strategy and common sense. Apart from any question of ethics or the future of civilization, I am convinced that it is good for America and for all the Western nations that these weapons be given up boldly, openly and as soon as possible even from the point of view of their own self-preservation and future safety. My advice for unilateral action apart, we have now a definite, clear and reiterated

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proposal and readiness on the part of the U.S.S.R. that immediately all nuclear weapons should be destroyed and no more of them should be made. Here then is a splendid opportunity for the West to accept the position without putting forward any further conditions. Let us not try to find and attribute this to base motives or fear. This proposal unfortunately is strenuously opposed by America. And Britain supports the American unwillingness and the machinery of political parties and the Press have been successfully roped in.

Here is an incubus sitting on the world. Everybody really wants to get rid of the incubus. 'But,' says America, 'the world is not yet free from fear. We suspect, we distrust, we fear aggression. This is the only thing that enables us to feel strong. We cannot drop it.' Now one can understand this, if this new weapon had been only in America's possession. Unfortunately it is now with the other party also and as Churchill put it very graphically and very correctly, it is no use relying merely on keeping ahead in the race. The other side's capacity for destruction, however much less than what is ours, is yet so great that the difference is irrelevant. In this admitted circumstance of extreme danger, if the other side definitely offers that the new weapons should unconditionally be given up by all parties, is it not time that we accept that offer even though America might reject the proposal that she should act in the unilateral, Christian, Gandhian way? It would be wisdom to show at least relative courage if not the absolute kind of faith that is required for unilateral action.

In spite of this, what does America say? 'Set the balance right in regard to strength in conventional weapons and manpower, before we deal with nuclear weapons.' She asks for a favourable balance in conventional weapons and manpower or at least equality before she can give up nuclear weapons. This is neither wise nor reasonable. There is not any reality in the idea of equalisation of strength in conventional warfare. One can understand the ideal of total

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disarmament. But there is no meaning in asking for equalisation. Equalisation between whom and whom? It is a wrong assumption that the world must, for purposes of war appraisement, be divided solely on the issue of Communism and anti-Communism. The pattern of international grouping cannot be assumed always to remain what it is now. Whatever arrangement we make for equalisation of conventional arms on the basis of the present pattern of friendships, it would be of no avail if the pattern alters. Russia was with the West against Hitler. Indeed it fought all the time in a manner which exhorted the admiration of the world. America came to help Russia and the Yalta papers show Roosevelt was quite fond of Stalin and his people. We cannot rely on any particular pattern of likes and dislikes or alliance in assessing dangers and safeguards. It is only those who lived in the Hitler days that can realise the intensity of hatred that had been developed against Germany and the German people as a whole. The entire nation to a man was behind Hitler and his atrocious ways. But now the world is ready and eager to put Germany on her feet and arm and trust her. It is a hopeful turn in the affairs of man, and we should welcome it because it proves that so much hatred and fear can be forgotten by men as if it were just an ugly dream. But it also proves the folly of relying on any particular international pattern as a permanent thing.

Again, apart from the pattern of international grouping, is there any common sense behind the demand for an assesment of strength in conventional warfare? Would anybody believe that much time would be lost in adding to conventional strength in equipment and manpower if the necessity arose? Again, although it is a matter of faith and not of reason or argument, let me say that I am fully convinced that the power of the West is quite good enough if nuclear weapons are out of the field and there is no cause for fear. A great issue is involved in solving which we should set aside all other considerations. It is not

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right, therefore, that the acceptance of the Russian proposal entirely to abolish nuclear weapons by international agreement should be delayed on grounds based on the relative strength in conventional arms. The world would hail a decision on the part of the Western Powers if the offer of the U.S.S.R. in this respect stands accepted by the West and the great incubus is removed. Let us not revert to the feeling that Russia has made this offer because she is weaker in nuclear weapons. Let us remember what Churchill has stated on this point which I have already quoted. Weaker she may be today but she has enough to destroy Western civilization if she makes up her mind. Why did Churchill fear that Japanese suicide man? When a certain point of desperation is reached, there is no question of deterrence through self-interest. Mad courage takes the place of calculation and history has recorded many instances of this.

When once this nuclear incubus is removed by solemn international agreement, it will not be easy, for many reasons, to revert to it suddenly by a party guilty of aggression. The time lag necessarily operates. It is no reason for not doing the right thing now.

If the world is freed from the incubus of nuclear weapons, is there much ground to fear aggression and a new world war with conventional weapons? A set of people will tell us to be afraid. But let us remember that the results, positive and negative, of war, stand much better understood now than ever before. International negotiations will have a much better chance in the present world than they had ever before. It is, therefore, not reasonable to demand what is called balanced disarmament and make it a previous condition for doing anything on the nuclear weapon issue.

We were told the other day that both America and India have the common goal of peace before us. This is true but we should not forget means are as important as ends. The great difference between America and India is that the means America is adopting for establishing peace

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on earth do not appeal to India. The *Daily Telegraph* wrote on March 21 : 'The pace of nuclear rearmament is getting faster. Can it avoid becoming furious? Can the pacific *end* prevail over the warlike *means*?' The Avadi Congress passed the following resolution: 'The ominous developments in respect of atomic and hydrogen bombs are a menace not only to world peace but to civilization itself. Even the experiments of the hydrogen bombs, if continued, threaten the entire world by their far-reaching and unascertained effects, which may lead to grave and permanent damage to human life and civilization. The total prohibition of the manufacture and use of atomic and hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction is imperative if civilization is to be saved from destruction. This Congress earnestly requests all concerned to bring about a cessation of the experiments and the immediate consideration of this matter by the Disarmament Commission of the United Nations'. This is the Indian position. It is no use mixing our Prime Minister with Commonwealth policy about nuclear weapons.

The U.S.A. does not accept this and that is the issue I am dealing with. The free world, according to American opinion, must demand 'balance disarmament' in respect of all weapons, and meanwhile, till an agreement is reached on balanced disarmament, she must continue to make, test and stock nuclear weapons. What is the climate likely to result from U.S.A. continuing to manufacture these weapons and making the necessary tests and in order that they may have the necessary deterent effect, to announce from time to time her increasing and accumulating strength? This process would necessarily develop a climate of increasing fear and distrust. Can any agreement towards disarmament grow or be given effect to in this climate? Can any plant of peace but fail to wither in this scorching condition ?

It is simple logic that if America and the Western Powers cannot agree to disarmament in respect of nuclear weapons

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wherein they are superior, much less could it be expected that the other party would agree to disarmament of conventional weapons. Stopping of further nuclear production is not an adequate offer when you have an established present superiority. The idea that it is easier to obtain general disarmament than to give up nuclear weapons is based on the belief that the terror of nuclear weapons would induce people, by nature wicked, to do the right thing at once. The more I examine the position, the more nonsensical it seems to me. These ideas remind one of the country behind Alice's looking-glass in Lewis Carrol's book, where if you ran in the opposite direction, you got more quickly to where you wished to go.

Distrust and fear are at the root of the present international malaise. If we desire to change the situation, we should do something to remove the causes of fear and distrust. May be it is a vicious circle but we should cut it somewhere and in any case, the opposite course namely, doing that which will create more distrust and fear, is no remedy. But that is exactly what you are doing through nuclear weapons and by the stand you are taking in respect of them. We are told that war is the real enemy and not the nuclear weapons, and we should, therefore, all try to prevent war and meanwhile both sides should go on making nuclear weapons and rattling the sword and use the possession of nuclear weapons as an instrument of terror in order that men may agree to end war. Mr. Clement Attlee wrote in an article in the *Daily Mirror* in the first week of March: 'Proposals for banning weapons of mass destruction get us nowhere. War cannot be regulated like a football game. It cannot be humanised. It must be abolished. Delay increases the danger that some spark may set the world ablaze'.

Is it not absolutely absurd that we could abolish war in such a hurry? We are asked to believe that it is impossible to give up these weapons which, instead of helping to win wars, certainly lead to bring civilization to an end. Yet

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we are asked to believe we can get war abolished straightway. The testimony of history is contrary to this as Mr. C. R. Srinivasan pointed out the other day when he presided over the address of my friend, the American Consul-General.

My plea is that instead of talking of what is impossible in the present climate, deceiving ourselves and deceiving others, we take up the lesser issue of getting the nuclear weapons out of the way because they threaten mankind in general and not only one warring nation or another and its interests or peace of mind. The Western thesis is that we are arming to disarm, obtaining peace through terror. Attractive epigrammatic forms of speech, but they will not help to convert what is psychologically impossible into a possibility. And we forget all the time that the instrument of terror is possessed by both sides and there is enough of it on either side although one may have more of it than the other. Winston Churchill said truly the other day that 'it is no use relying on keeping ahead in the race of nuclear weapons. The production is rapidly reaching the point of no return, when the other side's capacity for destruction, however much less than ours, will be so great that the difference will be irrelevant'.

The British war-horse has understood the position. Yet he wants Britain to make more Hi-bombs as it America had not enough already.

We were told the other day that the disarmament talks have made some progress; I should be very glad if even beginning at the wrong end, disarmament in the true sense became a reality. Whether they begin with nuclear weapons as I want or with conventional weapons as America desires, if a satisfactory situation is reached we shall all be glad.

My view that they should begin with nuclear weapons is not a religious dogma to which I held fast even if the other way about succeeded. But let me read the *Daily Telegraph* of March 21: 'Disarmament is a monstrous paradox.

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It becomes more necessary as the Powers move farther away from it. The bigger the hydrogen bombs we build, the more urgent becomes the need to control their production and prohibit their use. Certainly the current disarmament talks in London, which apparently have reached a deadlock, give no cause for hope'. *The Times* of March 21 said: 'The London talks have achieved nothing, and there is no sign that the Soviet Government thinks of them as more than an opportunity to divide opinion'. The *News Chronicle* of March 21 wrote: 'Mr. Eisenhower observes that the current United Nations meeting on disarmament has got nowhere'. After these concurrent expressions of opinion on the part of important London papers, it is difficult to believe that anything has been or will be achieved beginning with conventional weapons, keeping nuclear weapons going.

There is a report that Harold Stassen has been appointed to a newly created post, namely an Assistant Secretaryship for Disarmament. Much hope has been expressed over this gesture. But an important British paper has expatiated on this appointment in a way which leads one to think that it is just a budgetary job to reduce unnecessary and overlapping expenditure. Since according to American policy nuclear weapons have come to stay, much expenditure on the old-fashioned weapons could be cut out and so someone has to work on this. Does this lead to any hope? Disarmament in one direction plus rearmament in another and worse direction is not much of an improvement.

The Archbishop of York, Dr. Garbett, made a tremendous speech in support of the British H-bomb programme. He repeated the American thesis that the nuclear weapons will provide a good umbrella beneath which the work of peace-making can be continued. I am afraid that this thesis has found a great deal of hasty acceptance in British thought, in spite of previous doubts and native commonsense. The leaders of all the political parties in Britain have rallied round this policy of peace through terror

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with remarkable unanimity. The fear of a world war starting with aggression by the U.S.S.R. has seized the Western mind and is leading it blindly to very erroneous policies which take it in a direction contrary to where civilization has to go. We have a repetition of Hitler's days when the fear of Jewish conspiracies brought so much calamity into being.

In order to support the thesis of apprehended aggression and the consequent need for going on with nuclear weapons as a deterrent force, we are referred to three grounds.

The Western nations have had the experience they say of what happens when they are weak. They have seen, they say, how their weakness tempted Hitler to aggression. Secondly, they refer to the temporary unpreparedness of America which led to the Northern attack on Korea. Thirdly, they point out how Czechoslovakian freedom was trampled upon by Soviet Russia.

As this fear of aggression is at the root of the unwillingness to give up nuclear weapons, it is important, though unpleasant, to analyse the position in respect of these three grounds. First about Hitler. Would it not be better to agree completely to forget those days? Have not all nations, including Russia, learnt lessons from Hitler and from the war against Hitler? Is it sensible to assume that the U.S.S.R. will repeat the errors of Hitler? The history of no nation is so clean as to enable us to refer to past history for present purposes. Indeed I would suggest that the policy of hugging nuclear weapons is itself a dangerous copy of Hitler's vast errors.

Then as regards Korea, is it so completely clear that the partition of Korea into North and South was so good and permanent that we should consider any attempted unification to be aggression? Of course, all violent efforts are to be condemned but can we maintain that the use of violence to unify Korea should be deemed as a proof of unalterable Communist aggressive spirit? I think it is

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unfair to use what happened in Korea as a ground for holding on to these new dreadful weapons.

The third ground for apprehending Communist aggression is what happened to Czechoslovakia. Even before the war came to a conclusion, soon after the Allies smelt victory, there was a deplorable competition among the powers whose coalition had been forged only for the purpose of defeating Germany and was, therefore, not deep-rooted enough to last. There was a race between Britain and America on one side and Russia on the other to occupy ground with their armies which they respectively believed to be either their just reward for sacrifices suffered or necessary for national security. Czechoslovakia was all through that period, assumed to fall within the Soviet zone. Czechoslovakia was at the very outset taken under Soviet control. What happened subsequently is not relevant. Czechoslovakia was 'liberated' but the earliest opportunity was taken by Soviet Russia to regain what she felt to be her own. I am not taking sides. I wish nobody played with the freedom of nations in the manner in which it has been done. My point is what happened in Czechoslovakia is not adequate reason to feel that the moment nuclear weapons are now given up Soviet Russia will start aggression again against the West and will not abstain from throwing the world into a fresh world war.

Past history in respect of Czechoslovakia cannot therefore help us to come to correct conclusions as to what we should now do to save civilization. The Yalta disclosures have served, if nothing else, one good purpose—that we should not now rake up what was thought or said or decided upon or done in the flush of victory in those ugly days of ambition, hatred and folly. I have no objection to reasonable suspicions and reasonable vigilance. But I object to the misanthropy of unalterable distrust and uncontrolled, unreasoned fear. These are our real dangers and real enemies. We should not allow worry and suspicion to develop into madness and anti-civilizationist

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folly. I have no objection to defence plans. But I object to blind faith in retaliation as an effective form of defence or 'deterrence' as intimidation is now renamed. Retaliation has been sufficiently demonstrated to be no defence.

We cannot assume at one and the same time contrary psychologies in our enemy. We believe that he is so madly aggressive that he will forget all lessons of history and create a new world war. At the same time and contrarily we believe that talk about total destruction will deter him. Deterrence requires occasional use of the bombs and that is fatal.

I object to anybody assuming that the U.S.S.R. will proceed beyond her present boundaries and start a world war even if we, by international agreements, drop all nuclear weapons on both sides. I want nations to pursue the path of friendship, to be cautious but to be friendly, to watch each step and go forward in the path of trust and friendship. I want nations not to go the contrary way, *viz.*, to create terror, hoping it will deter the enemy from doing what is wrong. I do not want nations to announce and rehearse preparations to evacuate cities when nuclear attack is threatened. All this does not create an atmosphere for friendliness to grow. I do not believe that there is any danger so great as to bring about a feeling of desperation. The weaker party is always like to get this and then he will not mind the consequences and do what we just do not want him to do.

I do not want Government departments to be talking about the vast power that lies in the atom to do good, when it is irrelevant and premature and is just counter-propaganda against the growing world opinion that it is cowardly to be occupied in producing instruments for mass killing by pressing a button without even the compensation of personal sacrifice and risk, which went with conventional weapons.

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No one hates nuclear *energy* as such; no one hates atomic power or constructive uses thereof when such uses are ready to be brought into operation. But the talk of such matters undertaken by the political and military arms of a Government serve only as propaganda.

I do not approve of people talking about the 'atomic age' having arrived and to believe and make others believe that there is no escape from it. I am wholly against men throwing the blame on abstract phrases when what counts s human action or human forbearance. The atomic age comes through the activities of men, not by itself. We want it to come in one way and not in another way. I do not approve of people talking of the atomic age having come in order to make people accept a nuclear weapon policy. It is our business to see that the atomic age in this sense does not come. Such talk is a form of escapism throwing the blame on the age, as if we were compelled to it by some supernatural agency. We should not develop a kindly attitude towards evil saying that evil has come to stay.

An incidental matter is that the preparation of nuclear weapons by the great powers leads to a considerable quantity of by-products which are most deleterious to local health. A lot of these by-products are accumulating in the countries manufacturing nuclear weapons and have to be got rid of. They carry radio-activity. It is possible to utilise them to good purposes abroad. Now what happens if we buy such stuff? We get radio-active energy but we co-operate with the manufacture of nuclear weapons by the cold war nations, which is bad. I would rather prefer waiting to manufacture radio-active material ourselves without co-operating with evil.

If any official reports lead people in America to think that there is in India a want of goodwill for America, it is entirely due to the stupidity or impatience of those impres-

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sion-gatherers. There is deep-rooted respect and gratitude and even partiality for America among intelligent sections in India. Indeed they are unwilling to do anything that is likely to give the impression of antipathy to America.

'I do not think', wrote Bertrand Russell in a recent book, 'that the sum of human misery has ever in the past been as great as during the last 25 years,' and the reviewer of Russel's book adds, 'with the latest advance in technique it looks as if we might surpass even that achievement. It is literally true that if the species were to exploit to the full the resources of destruction now at its disposal, it would be the end of humanity as we know it.'

There is irremediable catastrophe facing the world. Yet the 'realist' will not listen to Bertrand Russel or to the evidence of the greatest men of science or even to smaller men of the world among whom I claim to be one. Is America to be the nation Providence has chosen for the melancholy task of perfecting and using this last weapon of destruction and bringing about the supreme climax in the brilliant play of civilization that man born out of the ape had in his foolish conceit, started enacting?

Again and again comes up the question of realism. Can there be anything more unrealistic, I ask, than this notion that we can defend ourselves through retaliation when we know that there is enough and more of these weapons on both sides? Which master strategist will arrange the sequence of retaliatory measures so as to prevent, one after another, American civilization from being utterly destroyed, British civilization from being utterly destroyed, Russia from being utterly destroyed and all hope of civilization in Asia from being similarly destroyed? Captain Liddell Hart, one of Britain's most eminent experts on war, has roundly condemned all these defence plans as absurd, insane and lunatic. 'After devoting forty years to the study of warfare', says Captain Liddell Hart, he has now to face to the fact that 'this accumulated knowledge has become useless, that any war in the atomic

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age would lead to the destruction of all the nations concerned'. Now this conclusion should not be used by either side merely to threaten the other side. It should be utilised to come to only one conclusion, that this new defence scheme of retaliatory use of nuclear weapons should be given up. The way should be shown for the abnegation of this folly as soon as possible, while still it can be shown. It should be obvious to those conversant with war-psychology that as soon as the lunacy begins to take concrete shape, the weaker will be much more desperately inclined to make an anticipatory attack than those who believe they are stronger. Here lies the greatest danger for the democratic world. Safety does not lie in preparation for retaliation as far as nuclear weapons are concerned.

On the last Christmas the 'comfortable words' were spoken from Cathedral Hill and James Reston commented on it that 'for all its bickering and divisions, Washington has sought in these past ten years to carry the message of Christmas into its foreign policy' and that 'it has striven to carry the Commandments into its relations with other nations'. So it is that I have dared to persist as I am doing, though it may look funny for an individual like me to play the part of adviser to great and powerful nations. I know that there are many hearts in America and Britian and France beating in sympathy with what I say although they dare not say in America as I say lest they be thought to be communist hearts. I believe there is a fundamental loyalty to the word of Christ in America such as there is not in other places and on which humanity's fate hangs.

Brotherhood Week was celebrated according to a 21-year custom in the United States and Canada in the last week of February and Dwight Eisenhower who is Chairman of the 1955 Brotherhood Campaign sent a message which contained these words: 'In the face of forces which work to lock each man within the prison of his own mind, which

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make friend distrust friend, nation distrust nation, it is imperative that we heroically, by word and deed, gave voice to our faith: that every man is indeed his brother's keeper, that no human being in the world can escape his spiritual involvement in what happens to any other human being, that no man in the troubled sea of mankind can be an island'.

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Breaking the thought barrier

THE RENUNCIATION of war is no longer a pious hope but a necessity; the only question is whether mankind will arrive at it before or after a catastrophe.' These words of the eminent German scientist, Weizsacker, spoken at a recent conference, must be inscribed on a prominent hill-rock, for all civilized nations and their statesmen to read and consider before it becomes too late.

An anthology of twelve essays on the menace now impending over civilization and human life has recently been issued by New Directions of New York.* The book is packed with closely reasoned and incisive reflections ending with two inescapable conclusions. The first is that there is no way out of the menace except the supreme courage of unilateral action. The other is that it is not by abjuration of this or that weapon, but by abjuration of war itself that we can hope to save mankind. Mr. Jerome D. Frank, whose superb production is set as the crowning piece at the end of this collection of essays, breaks through the thought barrier and plumps for Gandhi's non-violent resistance as the substitute and the only cure for war. Gandhi of India and America's Martin Luther King are installed by him as the prophets of salvation, who can rescue this planet, this precious jewel in the solar system, from the doom that hangs over it. The menace came out of the technological inventiveness of America; one day a great unilateral act on the part of America will remove it.

The diplomatic energies of nations and governments are being spent not so much on the solution of international differences as on disarmament. The attack is on weapons

* *Breakthrough to Peace*, A New Directions paperbook, 333, Sixth Avenue, New York-14, $1.95.

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rather than on the issues which have given rise to disputes and the armaments. The reason for this curious position is that the armaments have themselves now become the greatest danger threatening to be a force, independent of issues and men.

The First World War was fought savagely and confidently with the expectation that it would end all wars and make the world safe from the evils arising out of the ambition of bad rulers. But the very treaty which attempted to restore order, and guarantee peace in Europe, made another and greater war inevitable. Then came the worst evolution in the ethics of international conflict. In the Second World War massive attacks on defenceless civilian centres came, from then onwards, to be accepted as normal. Systematic terrorism came to be believed as essential to beat down all resistance and bring the Fascist war criminals to an unconditional surrender that would definitely end all war. The climax of this ruthless policy was reached in the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At the very moment when the bomb was dropped, the cold war between America and Russia had already started. The atom bomb, instead of producing peace, started the most fantastic arms race in history. Uninhibited by national partiality, Lewis Mumford begins his article in this anthology with the sad confession that since 1945 the American Government has devoted the better part of her national energies to preparations for wholesale human extermination. Rightly does Mr. Merton say that it is too easy to retire into the ivory tower of private spirituality and let the world blow itself to pieces. But the luxury of a clean conscience enjoyed that way would be immoral and amount to complicity with the fanatics and their destructive preparations.

Nuclear deterrence has proved to be an utter illusion. Those who relied on the power of the bomb to deter have now moved towards a policy of 'first strike' capacity for what has come to be called a pre-emptive attack. Civilized

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warfare has always been an atrocity in itself. But in the course of five thousand years, certain inhibitions and moral safeguards had been set up. For example, poisoning of the water supply and slaying the unarmed inhabitants of a city were not indulged in. In 1942, the beginning of barbarism was seen in a memorandum circulated among military advisers in Washington propounding the question that, as by adopting incendiary attacks on Japanese cities, Japanese resistance might be broken in a year or two as against five or ten years that may be required to conquer Japan by orthodox methods, whether it would not be morally justifiable to use the former means. 'More than any other event that has taken place in modern times', says Lewis Mumford, 'the sudden radical change-over from war to collective extermination has reversed the whole course of human history'.

Henry Stimson, the then Secretary for War, wrote an article defending the President's decision to use the atom bomb on Japan, on the ground that it shortened the war and saved more than a million precious American lives. It shortened that war, perhaps, but it has led to the present unending cold war and to the nearly certain prospect not of the death of a million human beings but of total annihilation of mankind.

Some people have argued that it is better to die nobly, defending democracy and freedom, than to survive under communist oppression. A moral standard that was defensible only as long as death was confined to a restricted number of people, on a small portion of the earth, cannot be applied to mass extermination such as is now necessarily involved in war due to the nuclear weapon. Nuclear destruction is irretrievable and admits no belated confession of error, no repentance. 'Under what canon of sanity', asks Mumford, 'can any government or any generation, with its limited perspectives, its fallible judgments, its obvious proneness to self-deception, delusion and error, make a decision for all future ages about the very existence

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of even a single country? Still more, how can one nation claim the right to decide on a matter that affects the life and health and continued existence of the rest of mankind? There are no words to describe the magnitude of such insolence even in thought and the magnitude of the criminality involved in carrying it out.'

Fear, often concealed and sometimes even given the colour of the opposite of fear, plays a large part in international affairs. It is fear that asks for national security. And when a nation secures the degree of security that it considers necessary, that nation becomes a menace to its neighbours. This was what happened to Germany under Hitler. It happened to France before Germany. It happened to Russia after Germany. To add to this, the great powers of the earth are today relying on fear itself to cast out fear. It is dangerous to assume that fear can be used to cast out fear. In the critical case of a ruthless man or nation who has realized that he is beaten, the mere fear of retaliation will not prevent but induce desperate policies, including the use of the H-bomb. In this century it is fear, not land-greed, that is the cause of war. Mounting armaments intensify the fear, and provoke rather than prevent war. There is such a great risk, Herbert Butterfield concludes, in having the H-bomb, that 'there can hardly be a greater risk if we unplug the whole system and if our governments refuse to have anything to do with the weapon.' According to him, the greatest gift that the West could bring to the world would be a resolution and public declaration *now*, before any war breaks out, neither to use the hydrogen bomb nor to manufacture it any further. 'The East may not believe us for some time if we say this. But the West's determination should not be dependent on anything that other people believed or refused to believe.' Even if the East refused to join us in this declaration, says Butterfield, 'we can declare that the hydrogen bomb is an unspeakable atrocity and will not be used by us in any war or even be the basis of any form of threat. It is a thing

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not to be used even if the enemy has used it first. The right of retaliation can mean no more than the right to multiply an initial catastrophe that cannot be undone'.

Mankind has developed the power to destroy itself in three independent ways—nuclear bombs, nerve gas and bacteriological weapons—all of incredible virulence. There is enough stock-pile of poison gas in Colorado State to wipe out all mankind and the Russians must have at least as much. We have developed apathy and fatalism about the total menace as we are unable to sustain our feeling of fear in the presence of a constant continuing danger. We have lost all sense of moral repugnance to the evil. We even respond to the overwhelming threat by denying its existence. A fallacious appeal to history is made that 'with the advent of each new weapon alarmists prophesied that it would destroy mankind and they were wrong'. It took all the centuries, from the dawn of history to 1944, to reach the average fire-bomb raid, which killed in Japan four thousand at a time. Today a moderate nuclear raid could kill fifty million people, according to the evidence before the US Congress Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. The magnitude of the danger makes the appeal to history wholly fallacious. Another form of escape is to believe that nuclear weapons are there, but will never be used. Negotiation will be successful, it is argued, only if we are in a position of maximum nuclear strength. A build-up on one side compels a build-up on the opponent's side for the same reason. Negotiations, therefore, actually promote the arms race on both sides. Disarmament by agreement, according to this theory of negotiations, becomes impossible. Policies based on maintenance of nuclear strength accelerate the diffusion of nuclear weapons among the nations of the world with its attendant dangers. At the Pugwash conference in 1959, the scientists of eight nations, including some of the world's leading experts in atomic, biological and chemical warfare, who were trusted advisers of governments on both sides of the Iron Curtain, agreed

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unanimously that only the absolute prevention of war will preserve human life and civilization, in the face of these three classes of weapons. War and the nation-State have become threats to the life of mankind in his planet. New social inventions must replace these two time-hallowed institutions.

So the anthology concludes that only Gandhiji's *satyagraha* is the solution. *Satyagraha* or non-violence does not mean standing by and looking on when an outrage is committed. The aim of non-violence is to prevent such a situation from arising, to inhibit the use of destructive force by the person who possesses it. This requires a variety of approaches, and a high degree of initiative, activity and courage. Is the international field it calls for a great deal of thinking and research. The achievements of Gandhi and of Martin Luther King were achievements in the same society. Fairness was a value accepted by the oppressors. These two conditions are absent when we deal with international conflicts.

Violent behaviour is not self-sustaining; it is stimulated and kept going by counter-violence. It is inhibited by a calm and friendly attitude. Non-violent resistance calls for the highest type of generalship, an extraordinarily high level flexibility, courage, organizational ability, and lastly the readiness for sacrifice and 'failure' which, by a strange paradox, becomes success. To save a family an individual, to save a province a family, and to save a nation a province, may have to be sacrificed, says the *Mahabharata*. Now, to save mankind, a nation may have to be ready to sacrifice itself.

Believers in non-violence may have to resist not only external enemies but seizure of power by international groups. There may be citizens who would look upon a government that sought to try non-violent resistance as traitorous and adventurist, and forcibly replace it, thus compelling non-violence to resist on two fronts. As against this pessimistic possibility, there is the optimistic possibility

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that growth of a movement for non-violence in one country would encourage the like-minded in other countries, leading to increased pressures on all governments to negotiate their differences peaceably, to bring about world-wide disarmament, and for the building up of institutional machinery for the peaceful solution of international disputes and the surrender of national sovereignties in favour of a world government. Non-violence is not, therefore, a simple solution or a gadget. It is an extraordinarily difficult technique, one which demands the development of a wide variety of measures adjusted to meet the specific requirements of different types and stages of conflicts. It does not by any means exclude or replace the widest educational process covering 'enemy' countries as well as one's own, based on the faith that all humanity is one and alike and amenable to good influences, that anger and hate are unpleasant emotions for all nations, which they desire to terminate, that love is a pleasant emotion which all endeavour to prolong, and that man is extraordinarily modifiable.

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Saint and the civil servant

A PROFOUNDLY disturbing book has come out. *Vagmarken* is the title of Dag Hammarskjold's book posthumously published in Stockholm. A lakh of copies have been sold out. It is being issued in English in the US by Knopf. W. H. Auden, the poet, who was Hammarskjold's friend, is helping in the translation. 'Vagmarken' is a mountaineer's expression meaning 'trail markings'. The late UN Secretary-General's recreation was mountaineering in Sweden. *Vagmarken* is described by the *New York Times* reviewer as a 'profoundly disturbing book'. Some of the rationalist Scandinavian critics are displeased with the book because it 'portrays the civil servant as a saint'. One of them seems so deeply offended as to say: 'It was a happy thing that he died before the Christ dream had quite removed him from reality.' These adverse criticism serve to bring out the quality of this remarkable man and this remarkable story of himself. It was written mainly in New York during the late Secretary-General's tenure from 1953 to 1961. The materials were found in his apartment after his death in the form of notes and diary entries.

Rationalist critics find it hard to countenance the phenomenon of a sane, cool and intellectual man turning out to have been a God-intoxicated mystic almost come out of the thirteenth century. According to the self-told story, his summons to the office of the UN Secretary-General was the fulfilment of a search for divine destiny. The book is not a record of public events but an intimate communication about what went on inside the good and great man's mind.

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This is what Oliver Clausen says in his review in the *New York Times*:

> It is clear from the book why Hammarskjold as UN Secretary-General felt himself above neutrality or engagement. He did not have to serve East or West, for he served God.

Hammarskjold believed that had Christ lived today, he would have been UN Secretary-General. Gandhiji explained his entry into politics in a similar way when someone questioned him why he entered the political struggle without sticking to his proper role of a spiritual teacher. 'The thought of sacrifice', says Clausen, 'haunted Hammarskjold always. It was his Christ identification that has disturbed the Scandinavian rationalists'. Here are a few of the striking quotations brought out by Oliver Clausen in his review:

> Goodness is something so simple: always to live for others, never to seek one's own advantage. You asked for burdens to carry and howled when they were placed on your shoulders. Had you fancied the burdens would be of any other kind? The sacrificial act and the sacrificial victim are opposites, and are to be appraised as such.

> It is expedient that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

> He who has surrendered himself knows that the Way ends on the Cross—even when it is leading him through a triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

> In a dream I walked with God through the deep places of creation; past walls that receded and gates that opened, through hall after hall of silence, darkness and refreshment—the dwelling place of souls acquainted with light and warmth—until, around me,

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was an infinity into which we all flowed together and lived anew, like the rings made by raindrops falling upon wide expanses of calm dark waters.

Here is a quotation which Hammarskjold takes from Ibsen, borrowed at the time of the 1956 Hungarian tragedy:

If you give all, but life retain
Your gift is nothing and in vain.

Hammarskjold, the reviewer says with deep understanding, 'was never a Sunday-morning Christian. His faith went beyond any one religion. But he always returned to Christ as a focus, an ideal, a union of the divine and the worldly. This was the union which he sought in his own role as UN Secretary-General. He may have sought through the UN to give God's Kingdom to the world. And at the end he could not help seeing the Cross'.

Hammarskjold belonged to the class of men urged forward with a sense of mission and deep faith in God—to the class to which belonged America's J. F. Kennedy and India's Gandhi. A man with a sense of mission and with faith in that Supreme Power which endows whom it pleases with the strength that is needed for the mission, may be any kind of civil servant, a Secretary-General of the UN, a President of the United States, a farmer or a police constable, or a preacher with no office or power but his spirit. In any position the man who is called to it brings together the divine and the worldly and ends his journey on the Cross exclaiming: 'Haray Ram!' The rationalists wish to isolate the saint from real life, to liberate the civil servant from the restrictions of spiritual ideals. Men like Hammarskjold, Kennedy and Gandhiji lived to spiritualize politics.

Is this story of the canonized UN Secretary-General irrelevant for us in India? Or can it inspire us too, and transform our life from disappointment and dismay to faith, zeal, sacrifice and hope? Will the persons unexpectedly

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installed in office after Jawaharlal Nehru's death apprehend the Call and gather the strength to sweep out the gigantism and exhibitionism of which was born this evil of Statism, and which has led to the brink of chaos and bankruptcy, resolutely turn the administration from its present sadism to humility, to a new kind of confidence firmly based on true democracy, and to hand over power and initiative back to the people to whom they belong, and rouse them to hard and honest work giving up deceit, greed, corruption, envy, fear and all the black dust that has densely settled in the atmosphere—recapturing the courage, purity of mind and rectitude that were ours during the time we were under the Mahatma's direct guidance? If God wills, the mission and the Call will be felt and fulfilled. But *only* if God wills. And God's will functions ever through some chosen agents. Let us prayerfully hope and wait.

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Immortal classics

Rajaji claimed that his condensations of the Ramayana and Mahaabhaarata were the outstanding service he rendered to the country and the world. The introductions to these classics show not merely his versatility but also the sharpness of his apprehension of the culture and values of ancient India embodied in these two classics which are at once great scriptures and great literature. Alongside of these we have Rajaji's pithy commentary on the wisdom of the Upanishads, the teaching of the Bhagavad Gita (according to Rajaji, a Bhakti scripture), thoughts on the Bhajagovindam of Adi Sankara. The great Tamil scripture, the Kural, also has many lessons for mankind. It is a perennial book of wisdom.

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Upanishads

IN THE *Upanishads*, we have a scripture which, among all the holy scriptures of the world, displays the most scientific spirit in connection with spiritual enquiry. The sages, whose thoughts and teachings we read in the *Upanishads*, seem to be as much inspired by constructive doubt as the most modern men of science. Their questions and answers indicate that they lived in an age when, alongside of conformism and the rigid maintenance of old practices, men thirsted for Truth and the atmosphere was charged with the boldest free thought. *Satyamevajayate nanrtams satyenapantha vitato devayanh.*

The conformism that prevails in our own midst today, in spite of so much science and free thought, does not confuse us. We are familiar with it and we find no difficulty in appraising and evaluating in their true measure both the conflicting elements, orthodox practice as well as the prevailing scepticism. But the conformism of some thousands of years ago is a very different thing. We understand it much less, if at all, and it, therefore, blurs the picture. We may fail for this reason rightly to appreciate the spirit of enquiry which dominated the mind and lives of the sages whose teachings are recorded in the *Upanishads*, and which is reflected in every line of this great scripture of India.

If we learn to make due allowance for the time-interval, and have enlightenment and elasticity of mind enough to be able to use and profit by a holy book with invaluable hoary associations, without having to get the text actually expurgated and revised in order to exclude the irrelevancies and the mere background of a by-gone age, we cannot have a better book of religion for modern times than the

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Upanishad. The spacious imagination, the majestic sweep of thought and the almost reckless spirit of exploration with which, urged by the compelling thirst for Truth, the *Upanishad* teachers and pupils dig into the open secret of the universe, make this most ancient among the world's holy books still the most modern and most satisfying.

It is probable that the *Upanishads* were originally composed somewhat as notes of lectures, intended to assist the pupil's memory in subsequent reflection. They were not composed as textbooks of philosophy to serve by themselves, as books are now written. Notes in our days would be short indicative phrases written to dictation or taken down by the students themselves. But in the old days, they took the shape of verses to be memorized, as writing played a lesser part in learning than it does now. Placed before us today in the shape of printed matter, with title-page, contents and index all complete, the *Upanishads* perplex us in many places with their seeming simplicity of language, covering thoughts that are far from clear. Isolated from teacher and without personal expansion and explanation, these compositions confuse us with antithesis and epigram and the use of the same word in varying senses, a style which we should have particularly avoided when discussing difficult problems. All this is, however understandable if we remember that they were not books to displace teacher but were notes to standardize teaching and to help memory.

Apart from the difficulty arising out of the form, and the difference of purpose of the composition from that of modern books, the distance that divides us from the day when these thoughts were propounded makes the greatest difficulty. The reflections were necessarily hung on to the life, beliefs and manners of those ancient times. To understand the meaning and the point of what was said by men of a long past age, we have to get back to the circumstances of that age, a task of great difficulty even for the most imaginative among us. Beliefs and practices that are to us

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obviously childish formed the large and main background of life in those days, which necessarily referred to and were set on the background of their own daily life, have to be interpreted by us, eliminating that background. What was very real and serious to them is to us childish, untenable and of no consequence, so that even the reflections thereon become un-understandable. The process of seeing a picture apart from the background is not easy. We are apt to lose ourselves in the reactions produced in our modern minds by the beliefs and practices referred to, and fail to grasp the essential amidst the distraction of the incidental.

In studying the *Upanishads*, we come against repeated references to ceremonials, sacrifices and the worship of gods and discussions as to their efficacy, which confuse the deeper and predominant enquiry. The position becomes to the Hindu readers worse still on account of the formal persistence in Hinduism even now of the shell of those beliefs and practices. To interpret and evaluate the substance of the *Upanishads*, we need a powerful imagination and an intellectual elasticity that can jump over the tremendous space that divides the beliefs, aspirations and psychologies of modern life from those of a long past age. A study of the full text of the longer *Upanishads* would be the best means of comprehending the mind of the fathers of Hinduism. But at the same time the difficulties pointed out above reach the greatest dimensions in these longer *Upanishads*. In making the selections for the following chapters, an attempt has been made to reduce these difficulties to the minimum without prejudice to the main purpose of presenting an adequate idea of the *Upanishad*-content.

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Raamaayana

ON ONE occasion Gandhiji and I were talking about a girl very dear to both of us. I said: 'How did she get all these ideas and phrases of love without having read any of present-day love stories?'

Gandhiji said in answer: 'But has she not read the *Raamaayana*? Is the *Raamaayana* not a love story too?' This struck me as profound. Then we turned to other matters.

Dasaratha's troubles began with love. Then the love of Raama and Seeta is the theme and substance of *Ayodhyaakaanda*.

In love that is not opposed to *dharma*, we find a manifestation of God. So was it affirmed by Sri Krishna when he explained his manifold being to Arjuna. The *Raamaayana* has, for its twin theme, love that is opposed to *dharma* also. The *Raamaayana* is undoubtedly a great love story.

Those who regard the *Raamaayana* as an allegory interpret Seeta as the individual soul and Raama as the Supreme Being. God seeks and pursues the human soul till He secures it. He is eager to save us; it is enough if we just do not obstruct or resist.

There are also other interpretations and applications of the *Raamaayana*. Seeta, the female counterpart of the Supreme Being, is the embodiment of compassion and grace. Compassion is the Supreme Mother and she is enthroned in the heart of the Lord. When she casts her merciful glance on us, we reach the feet of God. Paarvati's function in relation to Siva and Lakshmi's in relation to Hari are both identical, and are just variations of the same creed of dependence on God's grace. God as Father and God as Mother are not distinct. If the Lord were to be

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parted from compassion, our plight would be just that of Raavana who separated Seeta from Raama.

The quality of the Lord's compassion can be understood from the experience of true human love.

Many meanings can be read in the *Raamaayana* and its beauty appreciated in many ways as from a real diamond many glorious colours emanate. Seventeen months ago I began writing these weekly chapters not without fear and trembling. This week I close it full of thankfulness for the health of body and peace of mind which enabled me to complete this humble service. Learned men will no doubt find many faults in what I have written. But they must be glad also that it has done some good.

A word to the children who read these chapters. I have told the story of the Prince of Ayodhya mainly for your sake. Grown-up people may read Vaalmeeki and Kamban. Those who know to sing can render with joy the sweet songs on Raama given to us by Tyaagaraaja. But this story that I have told can be read direct by you, children, without anyone's help.

You should look upon Raama, Lakshmana and Hanumaan like your own fathers and elder brothers who are by your side ever eager to help you. Grow to be like Bharata, Lakshmana and Hanumaan, good and brave souls, full of love and strength.

Mothers too, I know, have been reading this story with joy. This has been a great encouragement to me. They can understand why I have told the story in simple words and short sentences for the sake of our children. Everything we do, we do for the sake of our children, do we not? Only women can realise and re-live the experiences and feelings of Seeta. The story of Seeta as told by Vaalmeeki and Kamban can be fully appreciated only by women. Only they can fully appreciate the courage of Jataayu and the prowess of Hanumaan. Seeta's sorrows have not ended with the *Raamaayana*. They go on, still, in the lives of our women.

In the Raama *avataar*, Raama did not know that he was God incarnate. Krishna knew that he was an *avataar* and acted accordingly. We should read the two stories

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with this difference in mind. The despair and grief that the man Raama experienced, Krishna never knew. When he sucked at the demon-woman's breast or was bound with a rope and thrashed for mischief, he cared not nor grieved. Standing weaponless in the battle-field, he led the warrior to destroy the wicked. In every episode of Krishna we see the difference between the two *avataars*.

I have followed the story of the Prince of Ayodhya as told by Vaalmeeki. There was a legend current among people, I think even before Vaalmeeki's time, that after recovering Seeta, for fear of scandal, Raama sent her away to live in the forest.

This pathetic episode must have sprung from the sorrow-laden imagination of our women. It has taken shape as the *Uttarakaanda* of *Raamaayana*. Although there is beauty in the *Uttarakaanda*, I must say my heart rebels against it. Vaalmeeki had disposed of this old legend through the fire ordeal in the battle-field. Even that ordeal does not seem to me as consistent with Raama's character. It is painful to read it.

As the Prince returned from Mithila he met Parasuraama. I have heard it said that with that meeting Parasuraama's *avataar* came to an end. Likewise, it should be held, I think, that Raama's *avataar* came to an end with the slaying of Raavana. After that battle, Raama remained only as a King of the Ikshvaaku race.

On this theory, Raama's treatment of Seeta after the battle and in the *Uttarakaanda* can be explained simply as the behaviour of a king in accordance with the customs of the times.

But, how can we comment on a work composed thousands of years ago and coming down to us in palm-leaf manuscripts subject to corruption? If, even after the fire-ordeal in the *Yuddhakaanda*, it is said in the *Uttarakaanda* that Seeta was sent to the forest, we may take it that it mirrors the voiceless and endless suffering of our womenfolk. Sorrow and joy are both alike the play of God. God him-

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self took with him his divine spouse, the embodiment of his own supreme compassion, into the world of men and women, and enacted with her a great drama of joy and sorrow in the *Raamaayana*.

Rain falling from the heavens flows into the rivers and flows down to join the sea. Again from the sea the water is sucked up by the sun and rises to the sky, whence it descends again as rain and flows down as rivers. Even so, feelings and values rise from the people and, touching the poet's heart, are transformed into a poem which, in turn, enlightens and inspires the people. Thus in every land the poets and their people continuously reinforce each other. The tenderness and purity and the untold sufferings of women took shape as the *Uttara Raamaayana*. Like an unflickering lamp, it throws light on the quality of their hearts. Whether the epics and songs of a nation spring from the faith and ideas of the common folk, or whether a nation's faith and ideas are produced by its literature is a question which one is free to answer as one likes. Does a plant spring from the seed or does seed issue from the plant? Was the bird or the egg the first cause? Did clouds rise from the sea or was the sea filled by the waters from the sky? All such inquiries take us to the feet of God transcending speech and thought.

One other point. In describing how Raavana carried off Seeta, Kamban differs from Vaalmeeki. In Kamban's *Raamaayana*, Raavana does not seize and carry Seeta as Vaalmeeki describes; without touching her he lifts her with the earth on which she stands. Kamban's version is followed by most popular expositors because this version is less painful to our feelings.

It is no sin or shame to an innocent woman if a villain behaves like a brute. Yet, mistakenly, we in this country look on the violence of a brute as causing a blemish to the woman's purity. It is in deference to this wrong feeling that Kamban departed from Vaalmeeki here.

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For the same reason, Tulasi relates that the Seeta seized and carried off by Raavana was not the real Seeta at all but a palpable image of hers left behind by the real Seeta. Thus the story is told in all North India. During the fire ordeal, it is the *maaya*-Seeta that disappears and the real Seeta springs again and returns from the flames.

It was perhaps presumptuous on my part to have begun the task, but it was a joy to re-tell the *Raamaayana*. Now, when it is over, I feel like one awaking from a dream of joy. When the Prince left the city, he felt no sorrow; it was only when he lost Seeta that he knew grief. So with me too. When I had to step down from high office and heavy responsibility, I did not feel at a loss or wonder what to do next. But now, when I have come to the end of the sale of the Prince of Ayodhya, the void is like that of a shrine without a God.

Let no one look upon work as a burden. Good work is the secret that keeps life going. While one should not hanker after results, life without work would be unendurable.

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Mahaabhaarata

It is not an exaggeration to say that the persons and incidents portrayed in the great literature of a people influence national character no less potently than the actual heroes and events enshrined in its history. It may be claimed that the former play an even more important part in the formation of ideals, which give to character its impulse of growth. Don Quixote, Gulliver, Pickwick, Sam Weller, Sir Roger de Coverley, Falstaff, Shylock, King Arthur, Sir Lancelot, Alice and her wanderings in Wonderland, all these and many such other creations of genius are not less real in the minds of the British people than the men and women who lived and died and lie buried in British soil. Since literature is so vitally related to life and character, it follows that so long as the human family remains divided into nations, the personae and events of one national literature have not an equal appeal to all, because they do not awaken the same associations. A word or phrase about Falstaff or Uncle Toby carries to Englishmen a world of significance which it does not to others Similarly, a word or phrase about Hanuman, Bhima, Arjuna, Bharata or Sita conveys to us in India, learned and illiterate alike, a significance all its own, of which an English rendering cannot convey even a fraction to outsiders, however interested in Indian mythology and folklore.

In the moving history of our land, from time immemorial, great minds have been formed and nourished and touched to heroic deeds by the *Raamaayana* and the *Mahaabhaarata*. In most Indian homes children formerly learnt these immortal stories as they learnt their mother-tongue—at the mother's knee; and the sweetness and sorrows of Sita and Draupadi, the heroic fortitude of Rama and Arjuna

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and the loving fidelity of Lakshmana and Hanuman became the stuff of their young philosophy of life.

The growing complexity of life has changed the simple pattern of early home life. Still, there are few in our land who do not know the *Raamaayana* and the *Mahaabhaarata*, though the stories come to them so embroidered with the garish fancies of the Kalakshepam and the cinema as to retain but little of the dignity and approach to truth of Vyasa or Valmiki. It occurred to me some years ago that I might employ some of the scanty leisure of a busy life in giving to our Tamil children in easy prose the story of the *Mahaabhaarata* that we, more fortunate in this than they, heard in our homes as children. Vyasa's *Mahaabhaarata* is one of our noblest heritages, and it is my cherished belief that to hear it faithfully told is to love it and come under its elevating influence. It strengthens the soul and drives home—as nothing else does—the vanity of ambition and the evil and futility of anger and hatred.

The realities of life are idealised by genius and given the form that makes drama, poetry or great prose. Since literature is closely related to life, so long as the human family is divided into nations, literature, cannot escape the effects of such division. But the highest literature transcends regionalism and through it when we are properly attuned to realise the essential oneness of the human family.

The *Mahaabhaarata* is of this class. It belongs to the world and not only to India. To the people of India, indeed, this epic has been an unfailing and perennial source of spiritual strength. Learnt at the mother's knee with reverence and love it has inspired great men to heroic deeds as well as enabled the humble to face their trials with fortitude and faith.

The *Mahaabhaarata* was composed many thousand years ago. But generations of gifted reciters have added to Vyasa's original a great mass of material. All the floating literature that was thought to be worth preserving,

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historical, geographical, legendary, political, theological and philosophical, of nearly thirty centuries, found a place in it. In those days, when there was no printing, interpolation in a recognised classic seemed to correspond to inclusion in the national library.

Divested of these accretions the *Mahaabhaarata* is a noble poem possessing in a supreme degree the characteristics of a true epic, great and fateful movement, heroic characters and stately diction.

The characters in the epic move with the vitality of real life. It is difficult to find anywhere such vivid portraiture on so ample a canvas. Bhishma, the perfect knight; the venerable Drona, the vain but chivalrous Karna; Duryodhana whose perverse pride is redeemed by great courage in adversity; the high-souled Pandavas with god-like strength as well as power of suffering; Draupadi, most unfortunate of queens; Kunti, the worthy mother of heroes; Gandhari, the devoted wife and sad mother of the wicked sons of Dhritarashtra—these are some of the immortal figures on that crowded but never confused canvas. Then there if great Krishna himself, most energetic of men whose divinity scintillates through a cloud of very human characteristics His high purposefulness pervades the whole epic. One can read even a translation and feel the overwhelming power of the incomparable vastness and sublimity of the poem.

The *Mahaabhaarata* discloses a rich civilisation and a highly evolved society which, though of an older world, strangely resembles the India of our own time with the same values and ideals. India was divided into a number of independent kingdoms. Occasionally one king, more distinguished or ambitious than the rest, would assume the title of emperor securing the acquiescence of other royalties and signalised it by a great sacrificial feast. The adherence was generally voluntary. The assumption of imperial title conferred no overlordship. The emperor was only first among his peers. The art of war was highly developed and

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military prowess and skill were held in high esteem. We read in the *Mahaabhaarata* of standardised phalanxes and of various tactical movements. There was an accepted code of honourable warfare, deviations from which met with reproof among Kshatriyas. The advent of the Kali age is marked by many breaches of these conventions in the Kurukshetra battle on account of the bitterness of conflict, frustration and bereavements. Some of the most impressive passages in the epic centre round these breaches of *dharma*.

The population lived in cities and villages. The cities were the headquarters of kings and their household and staff. There were beautiful palaces and gardens and the lives led were cultured and luxurious. There was trade in the cities, but the mass of the people were agriculturists.

Besides this urban and rural life, there was a very highly cultured life in the seclusion of forest recesses centred round ascetic teachers. These *ashramas* kept alive the bright fires of learning and spiritual thought. Young men of noble birth eagerly sought education at these *ashramas*. World-weary aged went there for peace. These centres of culture were cherished by the rulers of the land and not the proudest of them would dare to treat the members of the hermitages otherwise than with respect and consideration.

Women were highly honoured and entered largely in the lives of their husbands and sons. The caste system prevailed, but intercaste marriages were not unknown. Some of the greatest warriors in the *Mahaabhaarata* were Brahmans.

The *Mahaabhaarata* has moulded the character and civilisation of one of the most numerous of the world's people. How did it fulfil—how is it still continuing to fulfil—this function? By its gospel of *dharma*, which like a golden thread runs through all the complex movements in the epic; by its lesson that hatred breeds hatred, that covetiousness and violence lead inevitably to ruin, that the only real conquest is in the battle against one's lower nature.

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Indeed, the *Mahaabhaarata* has another name known among scholars—jaya—which means victory, conveying the moral herein indicated. 'Jaya' is the name by which the work is referred to in the first invocatory verse of the epic.

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Silken thread of the *Gita*

THE *Bhagavad Gita* is a two-stranded thread like the silk of the silkworm. Sericulturists know that the silkworm issues its thread in two strands, and when this is twisted, the thread gets the spring and the elasticity and the glamour that distinguishes silk and makes it so attractive to man. The two strands of the *Gita* thread are (1) the teaching of the *Gita-Acharya* (the teacher), and (2) the message of an incarnation of the all-merciful God. These two strands are twisted into one unbroken thread from chapter one to chapter eighteen, giving it the elasticity and the strength of natural silk. It is this silk we should weave into our lives.

For the sake of analysis, let us pull the strands apart and examine them closely, though still with reverence. The teaching part is a protestant movement. The object is to wean people away from a traditional goal that had, on the whole, proved futile, to a new and rich way of life—from *sanyasa* to activity without attachment.

No sensible reformer would deal savagely with what he seeks to do away with, but would try to keep the psychology of reverence intact while pushing forward the new way, almost as if it were just a modification of the old doctrine, explaining the similarity rather than exaggerating or even emphasizing the difference.

Understand the essence of things, says the *Gita-Acharya*, do not be lost in the formalities of ritual. What good is a pool when the whole country is flooded with water all over? If you have attained true knowledge which is a flood, you may discard the *Veda* which is but a pool—mind you, only if you have attained true knowledge.

The traditional goal was *sanyasa*. Its glamour is so great that even now, after the *Gita-Acharya's* attack on it and

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after the attacks of centuries of materialism and scepticism and exotic faiths with temporal power behind them, still attracts. *sanyasa*

The *Gita-Acharya* aimed at turning men away from *sanyasa* to the due performance of duty. The bridge-head he constructed for this turning from one road to another was the giving up of our attachments to the fruits of action. Is it your duty? Then do it. Do not think of what you will gain by it. It is enough for you to know that it is what you should do. It may produce many things, good, bad and indifferent; but it is not your concern.

What is the essence of *sanyasa* which you have been told is the holy path? Its virtue consists in the internal renunciation of desires that it involves, not in the absence of wordly activities which is the external result. In my teaching that you should perform your duties, says the *Gita-Acharya* there is involved renunciation, too, for I ask you to give up the thought of all gain from what you do. The essence that makes *sanyasa* what it is, viz., renunciation, you have in my teaching that you should perform all your duties and perform them always without regard to what you will get out of them, without concern or anxiety as to whether you will succeed or fail. Are you a soldier? Must you go to the battlefield? Is it your duty? Do it; do it without concern as to defeat or victory, and without seeking to gain anything beyond the satisfaction of having honourably discharged your duty. So, too, in every other case or walk of life, civil, military, social, communal or domestic.

The *Gita-Acharya's* teaching as to the performance of duty without desire or attachment to the fruits of such action has come to be called *Karma Yoga*. He himself would call it simply *yoga*, without any qualifying adjective. It is a way of life that should apply to all activity, secular or religious. He taught this and this alone. He did not present alternative *yogas*.

This debunking of *sanyasa* is done by the *Gita-Acharya* so delicately and with so much reverence for tradition, that

it has been possible for upholders of *sanyasa* even now to so interpret the *Gita* as to keep the traditional doctrine of *sanyasa* still alive and as consistent with Sri Krishna's teaching. The *Gita-Acharya* says that the performance of duty without attachment to the fruits thereof is as good as *sanyasa*. So, the commentator argues, the standard for passing as it good enough is still *sanyasa*. And, therefore, *sanyasa* is still the true and best way. *Karma Yoga* may be merely as good as *sanyasa*. For the sake of emphasizing the efficacy of detachment the *Gita-Acharya* may say that detachment makes the performance of duty as good as *sanyasa*. But that is only a style of expression, a figure of speech. *Sanyasa* still stands untouched as the supreme and real way of life to reach salvation—like the standard pound or yard kept by the government in its custody for testing the correctness of weights and measures in use.

In spite of what such commentators have said, it is clear that the *Gita-Acharya's* theme and teaching throughout the book is the performance of work as duty without the contamination of desire or attachment to the fruits of such action.

The *Gita-Acharya's* aim was to reconcile the highest in the Hindu way of life with active participation in wordly affairs which society demanded. This was his reaction to the evils to which *sanyasa* had led in the net result. He intended to bring about a change-over from *sanyasa* to daily life with detachment qualifying and purifying all activities. But unlike the angry and impetuous social reformer, he did not pull the house down or create confusion by doctrinal innovation. He explained and emphazied that what the *Gita* says is nothing new but the very oldest doctrine. The *Gita-Acharya* wanted that religion should be joined up to life in an integrated bond. He did not want that religion should be wedded to inaction and equated with laziness and dependence on others.

The other strand of the silken thread of the *Bhagavad Gita* is devotion and worship of the Supreme Being as a

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person. The glamour of monistic contemplation on the basis of the Absolute One without qualification had been overworked, resulting in intolerable barrenness. The personal Deity had to be revived. So God comes in an incarnation as Vasudeva and personally claims worship in the *Gita*. Except in only one place throughout the *Gita*, Krishna does not speak of *Isvara* in the third person. It is always I, Me and My.

> Think of Me always, devote yourself to Me, offer your worship to Me, bow in reverence to Me, and you shall in the end reach Me. This is certain, I swear it here unto you who are My beloved.

No one does anything except when urged to it as *leela* of *Isvara*. Soak your mind in charity. All men's activities are His. Therefore, judge no one. Surrender yourself to Him who rules all. His grace will lead you to eternal joy. This is the message of Vasudeva.

The *Gita-Acharya* having taken us away from the goal of renunciation and abnegation to the systematic performance of duties, although with an important qualification and condition, Vasudeva the All-Merciful recognizes that we must stumble in our path in a hundred ways and for a hundred causes. We must go through error and sin. The need for grace is, therefore, imperative. And so Vasudeva, the *avatar* of All-Merciful God, says:

> Come unto Me. You may have gone many times astray. Surrender yourself completely to My care. I shall release you from all your sins. Do not grieve.

This promise of grace and the acceptance of it in utter faith is an essential part of the life of activity that has to take the place of *sanyasa* according to the *Gita*. It is wound up with detachment and performance of duty in one silken thread.

This then is the *Bhagavad Gita*. The teacher and the Incarnation of God together speak it to us. It is a scripture

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eminently suited for imperfect men who desire to be guided by holy light.

Human nature is the same everywhere, and in all lands teachers and prophets have necessarily come to the same conclusion as to how men should live. Their teachings and messages are much the same as what we have in the *Gita*. It is not my purpose to plead that the *Gita* is better or fuller than other scriptures. I have only attempted to explain it to those to whom it has been given as a holy book and who deem it as their peculiar possession, who have less of scholarship than even myself and who like me stand greatly in need of grace.

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Bhajagovindam

SRI SANKARA crossed the ocean of Maya as easily as one steps over a small irrigation channel in the field. He wrote a number of Vedantic works for imparting the knowledge of the Self. He composed a number of hymns to foster the sense of devotion in the hearts of men and this I consider to be his greatest service. One of these hymns is the famous 'Bhajagovindam'.

Some immature critics of Indian philosophy believe and say that the way of devotion is different from the way of knowledge. The learned employ this distinction to emphasise a particular thesis on which they discourse in different contexts. We should not get confused by this and fail to understand the truth. When intelligence matures and lodges securely in the heart, it becomes wisdom. When that wisdom is integrated with life and issues out in action, it becomes devotion. Knowledge which has become mature is spoken of as devotion. If it does not get transformed into devotion, such knowledge is useless tinsel. To hold and to say that *Jnaana* and *bhakti*, knowledge and devotion, are as different from each other as gold is from baser metal is to expose one's ignorance.

Unless the senses are controlled, knowledge will not obtain a foot-hold in the heart. Wisdom will not come into being. How is one to restrain the native impulsion of the senses? The heart cannot be chastened if desires and attachments are not eschewed. Tiru Valluvar is the greatest among the noble souls who spoke to men with sure knowledge of the way to convert precept into practice. He said:

> Let attachment to the Lord be your one attachment.
> That attachment will help you to free yourself from
> all attachments.

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Nammalwar conveyed the same idea when he said:

> If attachments are given up, salvation is a certainty. Develop total attachment to the Lord to give up attachments and attain release.

The *Gita* points to the same path in the *sloka*:

> *Nishayaa vinivartante niraahaarasya dehinah*
> *Rasavarjaj rasopyasya param drshtvaa nivartate.*

If attachment is to be completely extinguished and if the mind should be released from it, the mind must be turned towards God. It must be realised that except through devotion to God, there is no other way effectively to restrain the senses. This has been the experience of all those who aspired to control the senses.

> To me who strove against obstinate enemies, not knowing the way to emancipation, He taught the way of love.

So sang Saint Maanikkavaachagar. The obstinate enemies here referred to are egotism and desires which are hindrances to true knowledge. They are foolish, obstinate, evil forces.

If Sri Adi Sankara himself who drank the ocean of knowledge as easily as one sips water from the palm of one's hand, sang hymns to develop devotion, it is enough to show that knowledge and devotion are one. No other testimony is needed. Sri Sankara has packed into the 'Bhaja-govindam' song the substance of all the Vedantic works that he wrote and he has set the truth of the union of devotion and knowledge to melodious music which delights the ear.

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Kural

THE *Tirukural* of Tiru Valluvar is one of the oldest of extant Tamil books. It is generally accepted as belonging to a period anterior to the second century A.D. Some scholars place it in the first century B.C. It is claimed by many that Tiru Valluvar was a Jain. I do not accept this theory. Tiru Valluvar was one of those rare and great men whose catholic spirit rose above all denominations and whose vision was not clouded by dogma or prejudice of any kind. His teachings elude classification on any denominational basis.

Tiru Valluvar's approach to moral doctrine is marked by a very thorough knowledge of human psychology and a desire to help imperfect men with practical hints in the struggle against evil. Throughout we can see how the poet brings everything down to the level of practicality without losing hold of the ideal.

The Second Book of *Kural* consists of seventy chapters dealing with policy in wordly affairs including state-craft, full of interest for the scholar and the historian. The chapters are not addressed only to princes and those around them. They contain principles of conduct that should guide all persons engaged in secular affairs. About the year 1935 I made selections from the Second Book of *Kural* and published them with translation and notes. My book attracted much more attention than I had hoped for.

The First Book of *Kural* is perhaps the most widely known and the most appreciated work in Tamil literature.

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It consists of 38 chapters and deals with the duties of man as a householder and as an ascetic. I thought it worth while to make selections from that book also and render the verses into English in the same manner as I had dealt with the Second Book and publish both together in one volume, giving to non-Tamil readers a comprehensive idea of this justly famous classic of Tamil literature.

Here is a chapter from the *Kural* on the doctrine of *oppuravu* or social co-operation, which is nothing more or less than the Gandhian doctrine of trusteeship. The 22nd chapter of this holy Tamil Scripture is worth being rendered fully into English for the benefit of those who cannot read the Tamil book.

> What good did the creatures of the earth do to the clouds that pour the rain? So indeed should you serve society, seeking no return.

> Good men put forth industry and produce wealth not for themselves but for the use of society.

Wealth is not to be earned for the purpose of self-indulgence or for satisfaction of greed. Wealth should be treated as the citizen's instrument for helpfulness. The word *velaanmai* is not just helpfulness, but helpfulness combined with a sense of duty.

> There is no pleasure in this or in the other world equal to the joy of being helpful to those around you. Do not lose the opportunity for this rare pleasure.

> Man is born as a social being. He alone lives who functions as a social co-operator. He who does not recognize this duty is to be counted as one dead.

> When prosperity comes to a man who has understanding and knows his duty to his fellowmen, it is like the village tank that is filled by the rain.

That is to say, it is an occasion for joy for the whole community. The tank keeps the water from running to

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waste or being dried up, and serves to quench people's thirst throughout the year.

When wealth comes to a large-hearted man, it is like the village tree coming to be in fruit.

The joy of finding ripe fruit in their own village tree is an apt figure for the prosperity that comes to the large-hearted citizen to whom it is joy to spread joy around him, for which, prosperity brings him the opportunity.

If wealth comes to one who is blessed with a large heart, it becomes the unfailing medical plant for society's troubles.

The village tank stores the water from running to waste ; so the wise citizen acquires and looks after his acquisition in order to serve all. The village tree bears ripe fruit ; even so the liberal minded citizen freely gives of his wealth to help all around. The medicinal tree is the precious alchemist of nature. Its leaves, bark, fruit and root take out of the earth those essences which relieve ailments of all kinds. So does the wealth of the great citizen serve to relieve suffering of all kinds. His knowledge and experience make up the alchemy that is needed to put the wealth to effective use for the benefit of the community.

Poverty does not stop the social co-operation of those who have a clear understanding of the duties of life. They continue their social service undeterred by adversity.

It is not necessary to be rich to be helpful. There are ways in which in any position one can help. The essence of social service is in the mind. Under each changed circumstance a new duty arises and the due fulfilment of it is what should be attended to. When, therefore, a man loses his material resources, he does not need to think that his capacity for social co-operation has ceased.

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The worst misery that poverty brings to the large-hearted man is the pain of not having resources enough to serve others in the manner he had been accustomed to.

If social co-operation appears to ruin you, it is indeed worth while to be ruined. You may sell yourself out into slavery if that would enable you to serve the people around you.

There is no price too high to pay for service to society.

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Story

Rajaji was also a writer of short stories. Apparently simple and even naive, they exhibit his intimate knowledge of Tamil village life and of the working of the human mind. He could be critical, but never abrasively so.

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Uttara Kanda—modern style

(Scene: Rama's camp opposite the fort of Lanka. God Agni appears from the flames of the fire and hands over Sita to Rama).

RAMA: I knew you would come back like gold purified in fire. Dear one, welcome!

SITA: My Lord! I did not enter into the fire to stand the test and come back. I wished to offer myself as an oblation to the fire and go to my appointed place. That is why I jumped into the fire. I don't know why Agni brought me back. Permit me to spend the rest of my days on earth in the company of the great rishis.

RAMA: But how shall I stand separation from you? How can I grant you the boon you seek? Forgive what I did and come with me to Ayodhya.

SITA: My Lord, that cannot be. The days of my life with you are over. When the war was over, you sent for me to see you and then you chided me like an ordinary mortal. After that, living with you is not possible.

RAMA: I did so to satisfy the world. I must not give room to the slander that a king did what was improper out of lust for a woman. Should I not exhibit in my life the path of *dharma* which men should follow in the world?

SITA: That is all right. You, on your part, should do so. Your *avatara* is over after the killing of Ravana. When Parasurama met you while returning from Mithila, his Vishnuamsa disappeared. Even so now you are a mere man, a king. Your *avatara* is over. But I am not like that. I know who I am. Hereafter I do not belong to you. I have returned now from the world of

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the devas. I have come back to this earth to spend some time before I become one with my Lord who has neither beginning nor end. That is all.

RAMA: Dearest! Do you speak like this in truth or do you indulge in fun to test me?

SITA: Worshipful one! The sport is over. Hereafter you must live in this world as King of Ayodhya. Your divinity is over. But my divinity remains as ever. It is not possible for me to live with you henceforth. Let the holy ones, Hanuman and Lakshmana—let one of them take me to Valmiki's hermitage. Once there, thinking of the past, I shall spend my time. Make an image like me and direct your affections to it. It will suffer all you do to it, whether you speak kind words to it or taunt it or chide it. And no evil one will steal it away from you.

RAMA: (Worshipping the devas). Should it all happen like this? Is this my destiny, Holy ones?

SITA: Give me leave till we meet in a region where no mist hides the light, where it is all bright without darkness, where everything is good without a trace of evil.

SCENE 2

Valmiki's hermitage

SITA: Greatest of the munis! Are these those boys?

VALMIKI: Yes, Sita. Adopted by you, these saintly boys will be known in the world as your sons.

SITA: Ah! how noble are they! The very sight of them makes my heart flow out in tenderness. May these my sons sing exquisitely the holy story which you taught them.

(She embraces Lava and Kusa and kisses them on their forehead).

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VALMIKI: These boys will sing your story, and men and women hearing it will be purified. I shall teach them to sing it as they traverse the whole of Bharat.

SITA: I add my blessings to them. Yes, without doubt, they will do so . . . . what remains is only my story.

VALMIKI: Sita, these children will sing about all the hardships that you underwent. Even the evil ones who hear it will give up their bad ways and tread the path of righteousness, their hearts moved by your tale. The good ones will feel a transport of joy. From this moment, look on them as your own children. The world too will know them only as your children.

SITA: True, true. May their song move the heart also of Ramachandra who rules in Ayodhya! May it move the hearts of his subjects !

SCENE 3

Valmiki's hermitage

VALMIKI: Sita ! Are you satisfied ?

SITA: I am immensely pleased, Oh Holy One! The children sing marvellously.

(She draws Lava and Kusa to herself and hugs them tenderly).

Nothing remains for me to do in this world, Mother Earth! take me on your lap!

(Sita disappears into the earth)

VALMIKI: Ah! Have you disappeared? Mother! Ah! my dear rishis! My mind is in agony.

RISHI: Great one, do not give way to grief.

VALMIKI: I do not grieve, but I am unable to bear the thought. My mind is anguished. My happy as much greater than when I saw that hunter kill the male bird with an arrow.

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SCENE 4

Royal palace in Ayodhya

RAMA: Who are these boys who sing exquisitely like the gandharvas?

VASISHTA: They are from the hermitage of sage Valmiki. They will sing your story, O King, the holy story of your consort.

RAMA: My story, my consort? Fool that I am, I lost her! (wails)

VASISHTA: Don't weep. You have to live for quite a long time yet. This golden image of Sita has the power to make you forget this mortal world from time to time, and to draw your mind away from it. The audience is waiting to hear the Ramayana. May I bid them come in?

RAMA: Do so, my worshipful guru!

SCENE 5

Royal palace in Ayodhya

Lava and Kusa sing Rama's story.

"In the beginning all this . . .

(Rama, Bharata, other kinsfolk and the assembled poor listen to the song of the Ramayana enraptured.)

SCENE 6

Kishkindha

TARA: Ruma! Sita is not at all at fault. In my opinion what she did was right.

RUMA: When her husband wished her to stay with him, was it right for a true wife to ask him to be satisfied with a golden image?

TARA: Sita's lord is in Vaikunta. Ramachandra is not her husband any longer. The divine *avatara* ended with

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the death of Ravana. Narayana's purpose in the *avatara* was completed with the death of the *rakshasa*. When Rama's shaft sped from his bow to kill Ravana, his Vaishnava part also fled from him with that arrow.

RUMA: I do not understand all this.

TARA: You cannot understand it, Ruma. But do not censure dear Sita. How sweet is the Ramayana song to the ear when the twins sing it! Their music makes me forget even the grief of the memory of my dear Vali.

RUMA: Your state of mind is superior. You are greater than the rishis.

TARA: Do not confound me by flattery. I must go back to my hut. Jambavan is waiting for me to tell me about Narayana and his sport and about the Cowherd Boy who is to come into the world to perform more wonderful sport than Ramachandra himself, and to teach how men should lead their lives in the world and how they should remain actionless doing their duties. Let me take leave of you.

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Chakravarti Rajagopalachari

The Story

CHAKRAVARTI RAJAGOPALACHARI, described by Gandhiji as ' the keeper of my conscience ', was born in December 10, 1878 in Thorapalli, a village in Salem district, Tamil Nadu. He was the third and youngest son of Chakravarti Venkataraya, also called Chakravarti Iyengar. C.R.'s mother, Singaramma, came from Kuppam in Chittoor district, now in Andhra Pradesh.

Rajagopalachari, Rajan for short, was four when his father became Munsiff of Hosur, which is less than six miles from Thorapalli in the direction of Bangalore. Rajan had his primary education in Thorapalli. Later, he joined the Hosur Government School. At 11, Rajan was sent to Central College in Bangalore for higher studies. He passed his Matriculation at 13, and became a graduate in Science at 17.

One of the abiding friendships he formed during his Central College days was with Navaratna Rama Rao of Bangalore. In a public meeting in Madras in 1960, he described himself and Navaratna Rama Rao as ' a pair of lovers.' The Scottish professor, J. G. Tait, made a deep impression on this ' pair '. He taught them ' to know and love literature.' He was their ' beau-ideal of what was good and brave and noble in man '. Through another professor, John Cook, the Principal of the College, who taught physics, C.R. found ' a living interest, not merely a temporary enthusiasm ' in science.

For his Law degree, C.R. joined Madras Law College. His mother's death during his law studies came as a blow to him. As was usual in those days, he was asked to marry

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even before he had finished his studies. Though offers came from richer families, Rajan married Alarmelu Mangammal, of the village of Lakshmipuram, two miles from Kuppam, as he knew that his mother had her in mind as a wife for him.

Rajan joined the Salem bar in 1900 and soon made a mark. That he was a keen student of national affairs was evident from his having taken to reading the *Amrita Bazaar Patrika* of Calcutta even before he matriculated. V. D. Savarkar and Lokamanya Bal Gangdhar Tilak evoked his admiration.

One of the first 'mofussil' lawyers to own and drive a car of his own, Rajan took a keen interest in Salem civic affairs and in several social reform movements. Mahatma Gandhi made his advent on the Indian political scene in a major way in 1919, but much before that, C.R. as he was now known, had begun his life-long crusade against the evils of caste and alcohol. Though ostracised by his community for his revolutionary views and for daring to live by them, he was elected Chairman of the Salem Municipal Council in March 1917. He lost no time in putting into practice his ideas on the uplift of Harijans and on Prohibition achieving a measure of success in both. After giving birth to three sons and two daughters, C.R.'s wife had passed away.

In his zeal for social reform, C.R. did not neglect politics. He was in the thick of the movement for independence almost from the first years of this century. From the beginning C.R. was a radical. He attended the Surat session of the Indian National Congress in 1906, where Dadhabhai Naoroji, the 'Grand Old Man of India', asked for 'self-government or *Swaraj*', and strongly supported Tilak. He helped V. O. Chidambaram Pillai, known in his days as the 'Tilak of the South,' in his valiant effort to float a *swadeshi* shipping company in Tuticorin. He had met the poet Subramanya Bharathi and was his guest in Pondicherry for

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a night long before Bharathi was introduced by C.R. to Gandhiji in Madras.

C.R.'s hero in politics was Tilak, though he had already begun to take a more than ordinary interest in the activities in South Africa of a man called Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He caught the notice and favourable attention of C. R. Das in the Bombay Session of the Congress in 1918 when Das sought his help in drafting a resolution that would satisfy both 'moderates' and the 'extremists' of the time. C.R. supported Annie Besant when she began the Home Rule Movement in 1916. However, when Dr. Besant moved towards a moderate position after her release from preventive custody, C.R. decided to organise the radicals in the south. He shifted from Salem to Madras in February 1919 to practise in the High Court and was building up a lucrative practice. He brought together radicals from different parts of the province, such as Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu, Dr. T. S. S. Rajan, Mr. V. V. Kalanyanasundara Mudaliar, Mr. E. V. Ramaswami Naicker, Mr. Salem Adhinarayana Chettiar, Mr. Madurai George Joseph (brother of Mr. Pothan Joseph) and Mr. Arani Subramania Sastri. The strength of this group was tested at the Provincial Congress Conference held in Kancheepuram in 1918 with Mrs. Sarojini Naidu in the chair. While Satyamurthi opposed Dr. Besant's resolution (of support to Indian participation in the war effort) with all the power of his eloquence, C.R., working behind the scenes, gathered delegate votes and won the day for the radicals.

C.R. anticipated Gandhiji's advent on the Indian political arena, so that when Gandhiji met him in Madras in 1919, they soon became intimate companions. The following year C.R. gave up his legal practice. He was by now established as a leading figure in the provincial Congress. His strength lay in organisation, in clear thinking and in logical argument. More often than not, he preferred to stay in the background during party meetings, gathering support behind the scenes. Still, he toured the country

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extensively to popularise the message of Mahatma Gandhi.

The first of C.R.'s five jail terms came in December 1921 when he was the General Secretary of the Indian National Congress. He was put in Vellore Central Jail where he wrote the now famous *Jail Diary*. He was one of the first Congressmen to court imprisonment as a *satyagrahi*. It was at the Gaya session of the Congress in December 1922 that India 'discovered' Rajaji. Gandhiji was in prison and his non-co-operation movement was strongly attacked by Pandit Motilal Nehru, Vithalbhai Patel, Chittaranjan Das and Satyamurti. They felt that the Congress should contest the elections and form as many provincial governments as it could.

The historical importance of Rajaji's role in the Gaya Congress, in spite of the subsequent truce with those in favour of 'Council entry', lies in the fact that it saved Gandhiji's leadership in India and establish it securely. From 1922 to 1942, Rajaji was a member of the Congress Working Committee. He edited *Young India* during Gandhiji's imprisonment in 1922. After the truce with the *Swarajists* of the Council entry programme, front rank national leaders like Rajaji and Dr. Rajendra Prasad devoted themselves wholeheartedly to the constructive programme chalked out by Mahatma Gandhi in respect of *khadi*, prohibition and the eradication of untouchability. Accompanied by Devadas Gandhi, the youngest son of Gandhiji and by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, C.R. toured the Central Provinces, Bihar, Bengal and Punjab.

Rajaji established a Gandhi *ashram* at Pudupalayam, a dry and famine-stricken village near Tiruchengodu, in Salem district. With the assistance of a band of loyal friends, C.R. made a success of Gandhiji's constructive programme in the South. The great Dandi salt march of 1930 led by Mahatma Gandhi found its echo in the South where Rajaji organised a march from Tiruchi to Vedaranyam, where salt was to be made. The fifteen-day march was decisive in demonstrating popular support for

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the Congress. A Government order prohibiting supply of food and shelter to the *satyagrahis* in villages on the route of the march was completely disregarded by the people of Tanjore District. As a result of the salt *satyagraha* in Vedaranyam, Rajaji was sent to prison for a year.

Released from prison in 1931, Rajaji persuaded Satyamurti, who had never yet been to a prison, to court imprisonment as a *satyagrahi*. Together, they were sent to jail but were released in a few days, because of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. When the pact was rejected, and on Gandhiji's return from the London Round Table Conference, a number of Congress leaders were imprisoned and Rajaji went to jail for the fourth time. Then the Government of India Act, 1935 was passed, and the Congress decided to contest elections to the legislatures. Satyamurti, Prakasam and Rajaji led the Congress to victory in the elections. Prakasam 'most magnanimously' asked Rajaji to take up the Premiership (as it was then called) and worked as his colleague. During the two years that he held office, Rajaji brought about several important social reforms.

Beginning with the Madurai Meenakshi temple, C.R. enacted laws which opened all the temples in the province to Harijans. He introduced Prohibition, first in Salem District and then in three other districts. Through the Agriculturists' Debt Relief Act, C.R. rescued farmers from moneylenders. Sales tax, an innovation in revenue collection in India, was introduced by C.R. He was among the first to resign from office when, two years after the elections, the Congress called upon all its ministries to resign. He returned to the path of *satyagraha*, and was again imprisoned.

After the Second World War, when Attlee became the Labour Prime Minister in Britain, the leaders were released from prison as a gesture of goodwill, and as a first step towards reconciliation, provincial autonomy was resumed in the provinces in 1946. At the Centre, an Interim Govern-

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ment, with Jawaharlal Nehru as Vice-President of the Viceroy's Executive Council, consisting wholly of Indians, was formed.

Within the Congress, there was fierce opposition to Rajaji's rejoining the party, and the Tamilnadu Congress refused to endorse his candidature in the elections. He was, however, admitted by the President of the All India Congress Committee, and was inducted as a Minister in the Interim Government. His first office in Free India, as Governor of West Bengal, was held during the post-partition troubles. He won the affection and admiration of the Bengalis within a short period.

In June 1948, C.R. became the first Indian Governor-General when Lord Mountbatten returned to London. Not surprisingly, Prime Minister Nehru desired Rajaji's continuing in the office as interim President of the Indian Republic from Jan 26, 1950 to 1952 when the first general elections were due. But it was not to be. Rajaji 'retired' to Madras. He thought so highly of Dr. Rajendra Prasad as President of India that he wrote, 'He filled the office of Rashtrapathi with almost the lustre of a hereditary monarch.'

When differences arose between Sardar Patel and Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajaji was called to Delhi and sworn in as a Minister without portfolio. On Sardar Patel's death in December 1950, C.R. took over as the Union Home Minister. He piloted the controversial Preventive Detention Bill and the Press Law Amendment Bill. The parliamentary skill that he showed on both the occasions is held to be still unexcelled. He came home to rest, at the end of 1951. But it turned out that for him, rest was impossible.

In the first general elections held under the new constitution, no part in the then composite province of Madras commanded a decisive majority and a United Front Government with Communist participation seemed likely. Called upon to save the situation and nominated to the Legislative

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Council, Rajaji succeeded in forming a stable Congress Ministry and served as Chief Minister from 1952 to 1954. The major actions taken by his Ministry included the lifting of rationing and other foodgrain restrictions as well as the passing of the Pannayal and Tenants Protection Act. As Chief Minister, Rajaji had reluctantly agreed to the formation of a separate Andhra province, though he felt that such demands would weaken the national base and create enormous problems for the country in the future. The controversy over the modified scheme of elementary education which C.R. introduced, ultimately resulted in his resignation.

Soon Rajaji began campaigning in favour of retaining English as the sole Union official language of India, but this ran counter to the thinking in the Congress hierarchy. He also found the country increasingly bogged down in what he called the 'permit-quota-licence raj' of the Congress. He was past 80, but that did not deter him from founding the Swatantra party to checkmate the 'authoritarian tendencies' creeping into our body politic. When he decided to throw his weight on the side of the Dravida Munnetra Khazhagam with Mr. C.N. Annadurai as its leader, many were perplexed, and doubted the wisdom of his move. It is now freely said that because of their association with Rajaji, the protagonists of secession in Tamilnadu dropped their separatist demand. On his part, Rajaji attributed their decision only to their political sagacity and realism.

Reserving for the Congress party his strongest opposition, Rajaji contributed in no small measure to the consolidation of the opposition forces. In the words of Jaya Prakash Narayan: 'Naturally, Rajaji became a gadfly to the Congress rulers who came to look upon this ardent patriot as a thorn in their side and branded him as a "reactionary" and spokesman of the rich, though in truth it was the Congress that was enjoying the patronage of the rich.... The nation itself has just regained its freedom

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from despotic rule, about the advent of which Rajaji had clear forebodings and of which he had given ample, timely and unambiguous warnings. Against this setting, today his writings acquire a new dimension and significance and call for fresh in-depth study.'

Since the day Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed in 1945, Rajaji had became an uncompromising opponent of nuclear weapons and tests. Mr. Khruschev, when he reigned supreme in the U.S.S.R., got Rajaji's book on the subject, 'Mankind Protests', translated into Russian and published in his country for circulation. At 84, Rajaji made his first and only trip abroad to plead with the statesmen of the advanced nations for the cessation of nuclear explosions. He met President Kennedy in the winter of 1962, as the spokesman of a delegation.

The *Gazette of India Extraordinary* issued by the Government, when Rajaji passed away at the age of 94 on December 25, 1972, said: 'His voice against the nuclear weapons was only an outward manifestation of a mind and a heart imbued with spiritual and moral values and boundless love for humanity. Basic values of religion formed the sheet-anchor of his life. He wrote a number of books all of which had a profound moral significance to the conflict-torn world. He was convinced that civilization based on materialism was self-destructive. The cultivation of moral values alone could provide a durable foundation to civilization. His book *Hinduism, Doctrine and way of Life* is an elaboration of his *Vedanta* and is of special interest to scholars and statesmen of all countries. The crisis of the contemporary world can be overcome only by a constructive examination and appreciation of the moral and philosophical background of the faiths and practices that have hitherto kept civilization going towards progress instead of *self-destruction*.'

K. VEDAMURTHY

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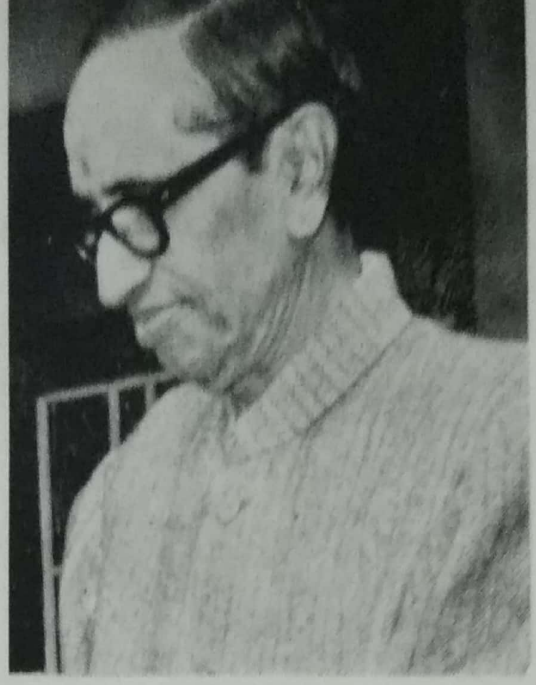

Vuppuluri Kalidas

Mr. Vuppuluri Kalidas, who has edited the **Rajaji Reader,** was inspired by Rajaji himself during his association of thirty-five years with him. He edited "Anandavani", a pioneer Telugu weekly, for a quarter of a century. Among the other works he edited are "Sidelights" and "Sidelights on Rajaji", both by Khasa Subba Rau, His "Radhakrishnan Number", containing original writings on the great philosopher, won international recognition. He also published "A Beautiful Life", a life of Sir Mutha Venkatasubba Rao, a former Chief Justice of the Madras High Court and the founder of the Madras Seva Sadan.

A law graduate of Madras University, Mr. Kalidas served his apprenticeship under Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar, the eminent lawyer and a former President of the Indian National Congress. It was Rajaji who influenced him to enter journalism.

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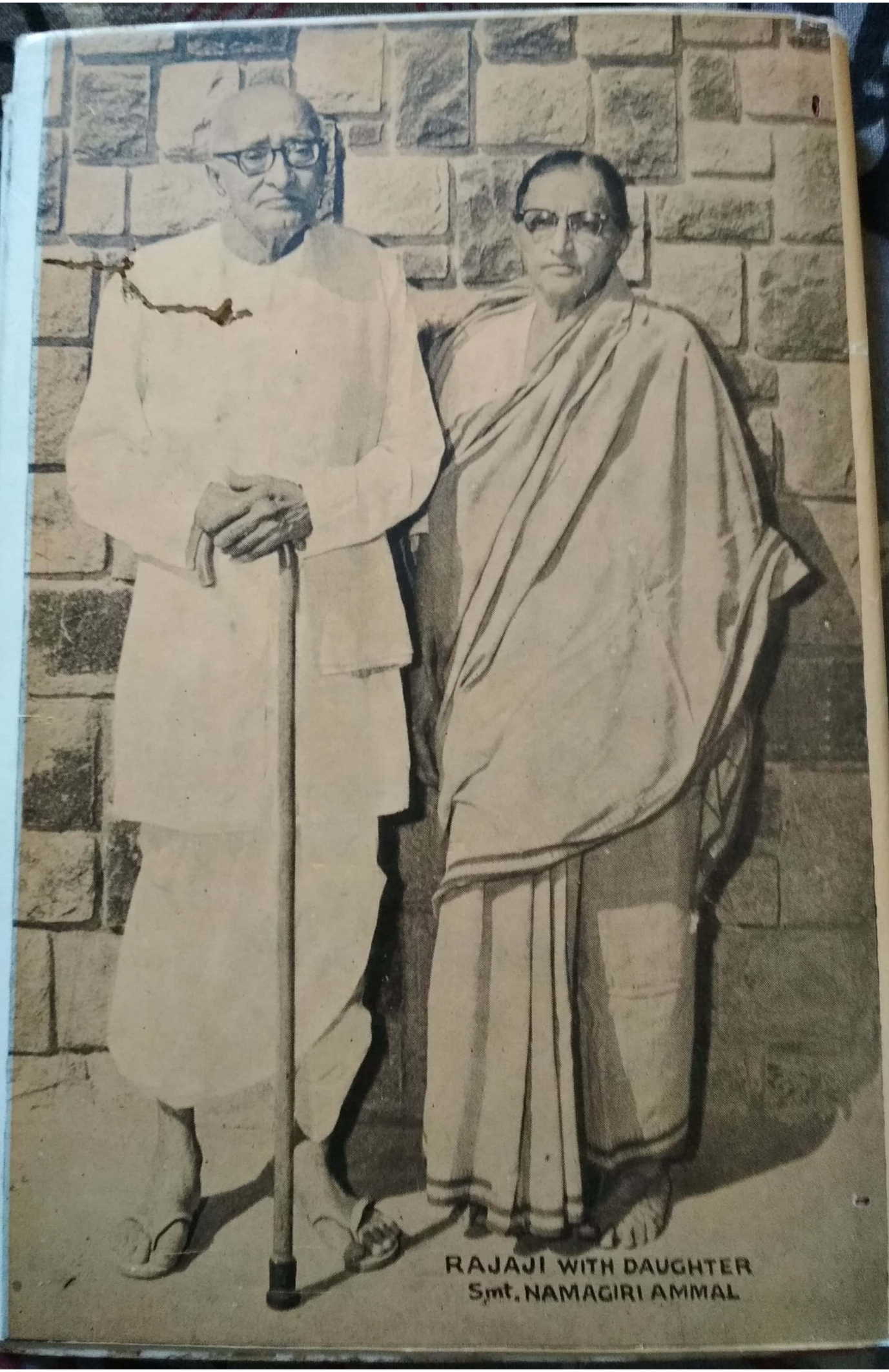

RAJAJI WITH DAUGHTER
Smt. NAMAGIRI AMMAL

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